

SOCIALISM OF CHRIST

AUSTIN BIERBOWER

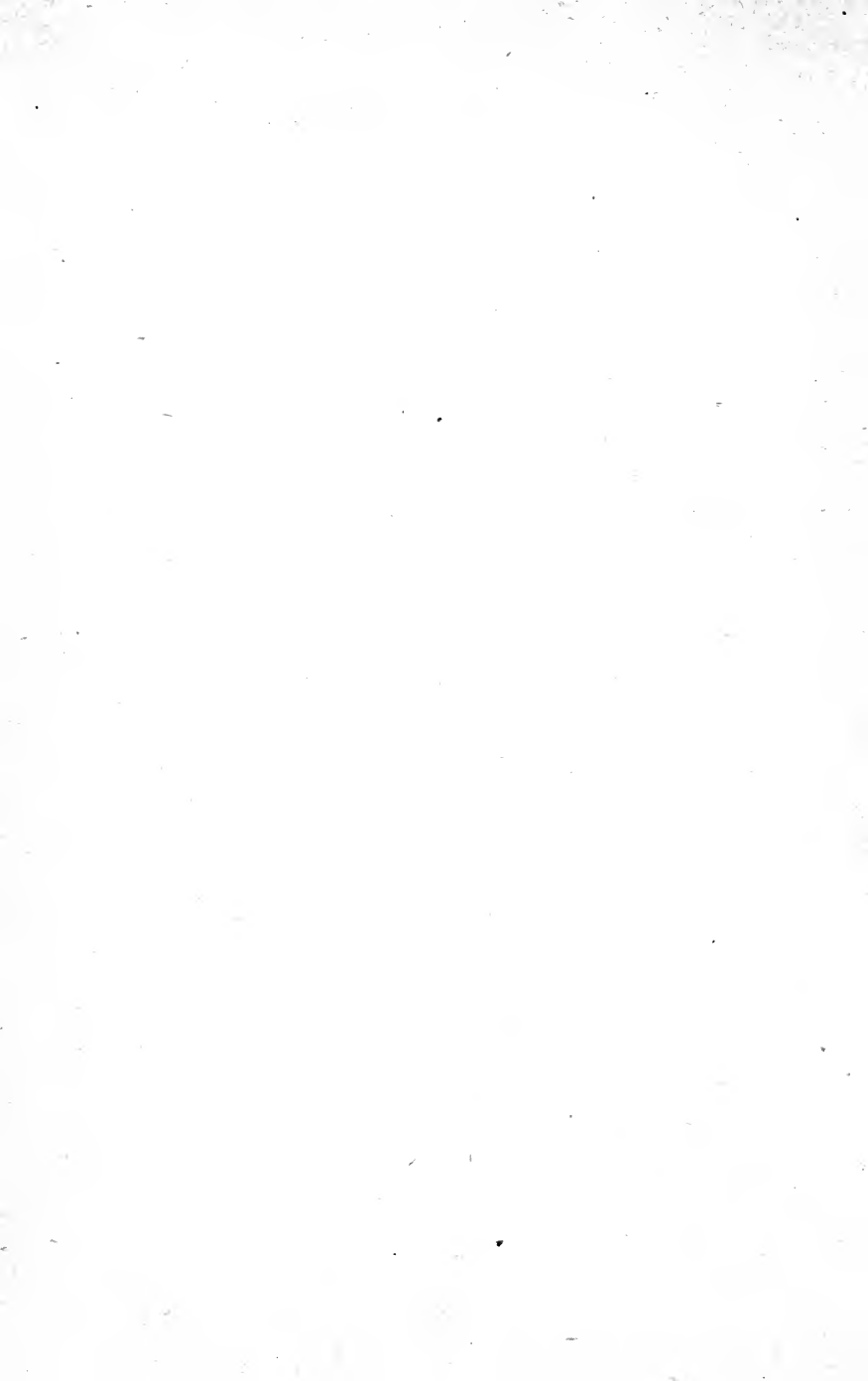
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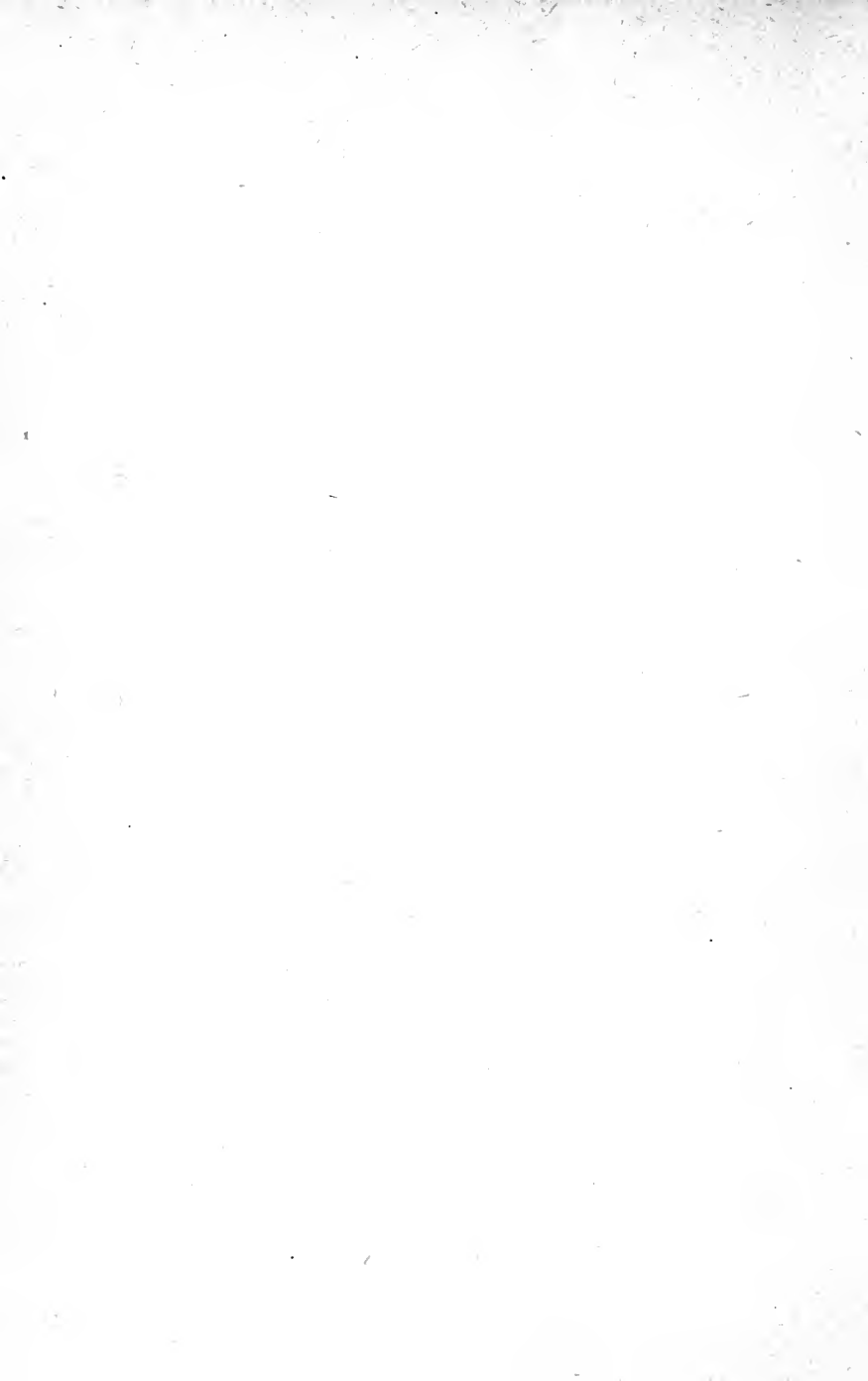
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SOCIALISM OF CHRIST



Socialism of Christ

OR

Attitude of Early Christians
Toward Modern Problems

BY

AUSTIN BIERBOWER

Author of "The Morals of Christ" "The Virtues and their
Reasons" etc



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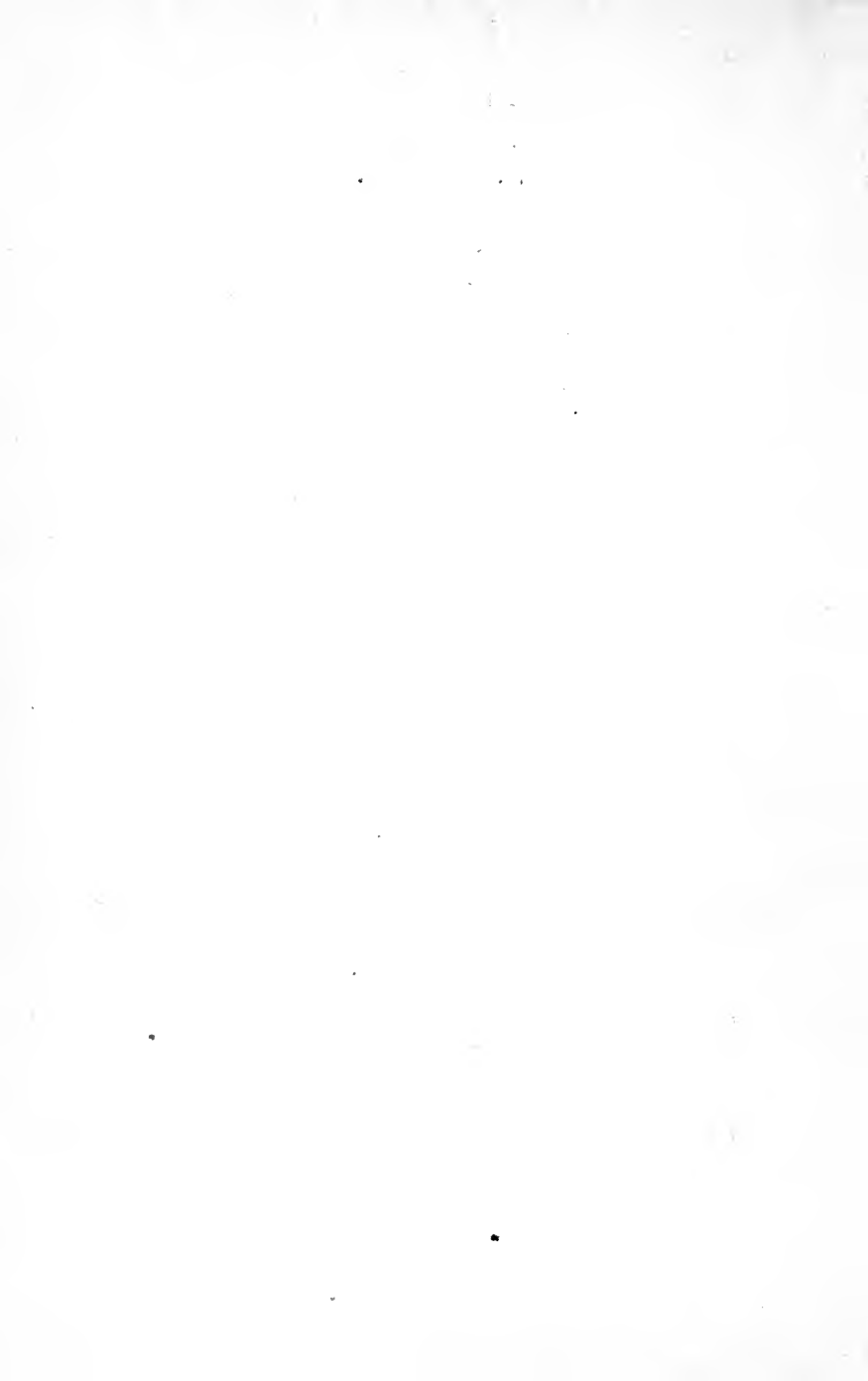
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SOCIALISM OF CHRIST

CHAPTER I

GOVERNMENT BY THE POOR

Like all other great world movements, Christianity was at first largely political and socialistic, and depended on this character for its propagation. The common people in the time of Christ, as at present in Paris and Berlin, were dissatisfied in their misery, and looked for some revolution to relieve them. The disaffection of poverty against wealth, of labor against capital, of commonalty against aristocracy, of subject against ruler, and of slave against master was general throughout the Roman Empire. The lower classes as a body, demanded deliverance from their wrongs and better chances in the over-crowded avenues to wealth and happiness.

Re-distribution of property, the abolition of individual possessions, the community of goods and other wild projects were espoused with intense interest. Remnants of the old Roman agrarianism, of Lacedemonian and Cretan communism or of Essenic co-operation appeared in nearly all the issues of the day. Any new agitation, accordingly, which, like Christianity, seemed to contemplate these objects, attracted the people, and was, in turn, moulded by them to a politico-social interest.

At the same time, there was a large republican element—men of theoretical and ideal turn—who dreamed of absolute equality, justice and general good will; and who, accordingly, demanded the overthrow of kings, nobility, priests, privileges and distinctions of blood, and perhaps even anticipated the return of the ancient Roman Republic itself confederate and cosmopolitan. There was also a nation of discontented Jews, in whose country and race Christ was born, who, being dissatisfied in their subjection, looked for a deliverance from the Roman yoke, and like the Irish and Poles of to-day, wanted back their ancient kingdom and

glory. All these classes naturally espoused with zeal a movement which, like the promised kingdom of Christ, looked toward such a consummation.

Such being the desires of the people, Christ, when He first declared His views, and His cause when launched on the public, were interpreted in this interest, and expected to further these ends; so that to the common people in their misery Christ appeared as a Savior, to the ideal Republicans as a Deliverer, and to the monarchical Jews as a King; and to them all His new community, or republic, or kingdom seemed like a guaranty of their political ideals.

I propose, in this essay, to present the social and political aspects of Christ's teachings and of early Christianity, as drawn from the Gospels and from contemporaneous sources.

In pursuance of this object I observe, first, that Jesus proposed, in a general way, to establish a "kingdom," and announced that this was the chief object of His mission. He proposed expressly to establish a new kingdom, in contradistinction to the old, or existing kingdoms; a kingdom which should be in the interest of

the people—of the poor, the lower classes, the weak, the sorrowing, the unfortunate,—and which should be a kingdom of righteousness, or justice, as opposed to the existing ones of injustice—a kingdom in which there should be no oppression, inequalities or wrongs, but where all should be equal and happy.

He taught His followers to pray and work for this kingdom. The burden of their common prayer was, "Thy kingdom come;" and they understood themselves as working for a kingdom in all that they did for Christ. He gave much of His attention to explaining this new kingdom, and to getting the people ready for it. The King therein, He said, was to be God, and it was to be a kingdom in which no man was to be above another, a theocracy in which there was to be allegiance to none and authority over none, a community in which all should be relieved of their wants, and be happy.

With apparent disloyalty and hostility to existing authorities, Jesus taught the people that they belonged to this new kingdom, and that it was their duty to enter into it. The Lord's Prayer, which was the key-note of His

ministry, and fraught with all the significance of His mission, was, from beginning to end, capable of being interpreted as a political utterance in this sense.

For, turning the people away from existing monarchs and *patres patriae*, He taught them in this prayer to say, "Our Father (and king) which art in Heaven (not on earth). Hallowed be *thy* name (not Cæsar's). *Thy* kingdom come, (not the Roman or provincial). *Thy* will be done on earth as it is in Heaven (mark, *on earth*) etc. For *thine* is the kingdom, (not Cæsar's, or Herod's) the power, and the glory, (all the royal attributes) forever and ever. Amen." (So let it be, Viva il regno!)

This prayer, I say, which was put in everybody's mouth as a propagating formula, can be construed to embody everything political and revolutionary; for what is not political in the strictest sense, is interpretable as socialistic; namely the three petitions, "Give us this day our daily bread;" "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors;" and "Deliver us from evil." For the first of these petitions, "Give us this day our daily bread," is the old

undying and most characteristic of all socialistic cries, and anticipated the commune, of which I shall hereafter speak when, in Christ's new kingdom, it was expected that food would be distributed to all, and daily as they might have need. The second, scarcely less socialistic petition, "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors," had possible reference to the future holding of goods in common, of which also I shall presently speak; when no man should have money, or right to any, and no man should need any, but when all debts should be wiped out because the property should belong to all. And the petition, "Deliver us from evil," or from existing miseries, was a prayer for what they sought as the ultimate object of their whole movement—the salvation of the unfortunate from the misfortunes of society.

Thus, therefore, in general, Christ proposed to establish a kingdom; and, like men in all such projects, He was necessarily radical and revolutionary. He proposed to establish a kingdom in the interest of those not in authority, or of the "outs;" a kingdom favoring the ruled as against the rulers, whether civil or

ecclesiastical, and favoring the individual or citizen, as against the states, laws, kings, nobility, priests and land and property owners.

For the realization of this kingdom there was contemplated all that it implies, and first a general revolution. This revolution, as already intimated, was to be in the interest of the people—an overturning of the present state for a new one, an elevating of a new class instead of the old—a revolution in which the high should be brought low and the low high, the first last and the last first.

The opening utterances of the Gospel—the Beatitudes in the sermon on the Mount—were, as recorded by Luke, a comprehensive statement of this idea. “Blessed,” says Christ, “be ye poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are ye that hunger now, for ye shall be filled. Blessed are ye that weep now, for ye shall laugh. Blessed are ye when men shall hate you, and shall separate you from their company, (aristocratic circles and higher classes,) and shall reproach you, (as they generally do the poor,) and count out your name as evil, (low) for the Son of Man’s sake. Rejoice ye in that day and leap for



joy, for behold your reward is great in Heaven (the new kingdom). But woe unto you that are rich, for ye have received your consolation. Woe unto you that are full, for ye shall hunger. Woe unto you that laugh now, for ye shall mourn and weep. Woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you,"—in short woe unto you that are now in the ascendancy, or in sympathy with such, for you and your cause shall be abased; and, Blessed are ye who are in the unfortunate and nether ranks, for ye shall be brought uppermost by the coming revolution.

A complete reversal of conditions is to be the result of Christ's work, a reversal which will give those a chance who have hitherto had none. "The axe," He says, "is laid at the root of the tree," and the reversal is to be radical and comprehensive. "Not one stone shall be left upon another," in the social fabric "that shall not be thrown down;" and, in the remodeling of society which is to follow the rejected stone—the common people—shall be made the head of the corner.

As prophetic of the mission of Christ the announcement is made at His birth: "Behold

this child which is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel;" and again, "For unto you is born this day a Savior, which is Christ the Lord, a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of thy *people* Israel;" in other words, a light to lighten the *peoples* of all countries, and the especial glory of the *people* of Israel. "Prepare ye," says His messenger in contemplation of this, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord; make His path straight; let the high places be made low, and the valleys be exalted. And all flesh—and not the better circumstanced only—shall see the salvation of God. Every one that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." "God hath chosen the weak things of the world to put to naught those that are mighty," and the weak shall yet rise up to stand in the place of their oppressors. The rich and the great who have hitherto had the management of the world, having proved faithless to their trust, are to be despoiled, and the inheritance given to others. "They have eaten and drunken," says Christ, "and beaten my servants," the people; and now He proposes to inaugurate a new *regime* without them.

The parable of the marriage supper illustrates this; showing how God had called up successively the different classes to conduct the interests of humanity, until, on experiencing the faithlessness of all the rest, He comes at last to the people. The King, He tells us, made a feast for His Son. He invited the noble guests—the rich, the polite, the officials—but they, having separate interests of their own, would not come. He then sent for the people—to the lanes and highways and hedges. The former, He tells us, who had tried to rule the world, were not worthy; and now He was about to give the government over to the poor. “He hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts; He hath put down the mighty from their seat, and exalted them of low degree; He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He hath turned away empty.” “Blessed,” says Christ, in view of this democratic consummation, “are the eyes which see the things that ye see, for I tell you that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.”

His followers generally expected, as I shall hereafter more fully show, elevation in exchange for their former degradation. Throughout Christ's entire career, during which there was much talk of a "kingdom," the question ever recurred as to who should be greatest in this kingdom, or who should have the chief offices and positions of honor. Everything, in short, indicates that it was this prospect of elevation that actuated many in espousing the cause of Christ. A worldly rather than a spiritual kingdom was contemplated by them; and the kingdom of Heaven was expected to be in this world rather than in another, and to be distant in time rather than space.

This appearing to be the general object and aim of the Christian movement, the agitation was essentially popular—a movement of the people in the interest of the people—of the poor, the sorrowing and, in short, of *les misérables*. "When Jesus saw the multitude" we are told, "He was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted and were scattered abroad as sheep having no shepherd." He meant, He said, to gather these up and give them a chance. "Come

unto me," He accordingly cries, "all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you (instead of that of the old society) and learn of me, for I (even the King and Ruler Himself) am meek and lowly in mind, and ye shall find rest for your souls."

We have seen that while it was prophesied that He would "scatter the proud in the imagination of their hearts," and "put down the mighty from their seat," it was added that He would "exalt them of low degree," and that, while without sympathy, He would "turn the rich away empty," He would "fill the hungry with good things." The angel, or messenger who announced His coming, spoke of Him as one bringing something good for the people. "Behold I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people." "Glory to God in the highest," is the general ejaculation of ancient Christianity, "peace on earth, good will to men!" Christ is foretold as "a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of the people of Israel." "The spirit of the Lord God is upon me," He says, in contemplation of His future career, "because He hath annointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent

me to heal the broken hearted; to preach deliverance to the captive, and receiving of sight to the blind; to set at liberty them that are bruised; to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." Christ quotes this from Isaiah, and then says: "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears."

The Beatitudes, as reported by Matthew, are nothing but an enunciation of the same idea. Whereas the rich and great have heretofore monopolized the control and happiness of the world, it is now to be another class that is to do this. "Blessed," He says, "are the poor in spirit (the intellectually weak), for theirs (and not the able men's) is the kingdom of Heaven, (that is, this new kingdom in contemplation). Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they which hunger and thirst after righteousness, (and not after wealth and power), for they shall be filled." For there appears to be no reference here to spiritual, but only to temporal advantages:—"they shall *inherit the earth*;" "they shall be *comforted*;" "they shall be *filled*." "Blessed,"

He continues, "are the merciful," and "the pure in heart,"—characters very different from those who, under the old conditions of society, were calculated to gain the mastery of the world—bloodthirsty though heroic men who ruled by force. "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they (and not the warriors, as hitherto) shall be called the Sons of God," (the *Divi* or Deified, as the old heroes and emperors, like Hercules and Augustus, used to be). "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven," (in other words, The persecuted shall become the possessors of power). "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in Heaven."

In short, all these Beatitudes were a group of promises to the world, that the weaker, submissive, and non-resistant element, should rise to conquer and rule in society; that moral instead of physical and intellectual force should prevail; that women, children and invalids, instead of strong men, should be the enviable ones; and that martyrdom, tears and sorrow, instead of

gratification and vitality, should be the future elements of power; a thought which is elsewhere expressed in the words "God hath chosen the weak things of the earth to confound the strong and the mighty," and which we have fulfilled in subsequent events when the Cross rose over the Roman eagle and the lion of Carthage; and when the *Mater dolorosa* and the sorrowing Magdalene became the goddesses of the Roman Empire.

Everywhere this idea is set forth that the under and distressed classes are to have the power. "The poor have the gospel preached to them," or "There is good news for the poor." The ministers and agents of this new kingdom were taken from among fishermen, tax gatherers and other laboring and menial classes. Christ appeared Himself as a carpenter, or carpenter's son, and employed nobody of any social pretensions in His work, nor did He make any such pretensions Himself. He called Himself the "Son of Man," and was delighted to be known as the representative of humanity, and the champion of the people. Though others called him the Son of God, He does not appear to have appropriated this title Himself.

Throughout all the ministry of Jesus, accordingly, there was a tenderness for the poor and a concern for their wants. He defended them against the creditor, the landlord, the oppressor of the widow and fatherless, and tried to turn the hearts of such classes to a regard for them. "Give to him that asketh," He says, "And from him that would borrow turn not away;" "Pure religion," according to His system, "is to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction." He encourages the giving of alms, and the relieving of distress wherever found.

The grand distinction in His mind between those who are fit for His kingdom and those who are not fit, is that the former regard helpfully the sufferers in want, and the latter do not. "I was hungry," He says—and by / He explains that He means every member of humanity—"I was hungry, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me." "For," He adds, "inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of my

brethren, ye have done it unto me." "Whosoever," He continues, "shall give to one of my disciples a cup of cold water in my name, he shall have his reward."

He came, He says, "to save the lost;" and is "not willing that one of His little ones shall perish;" meaning thereby the people, whom He took specially under His care. When the hungry and fainting multitude crowded around Him, and "the disciples said, 'Send them away that they may go and buy themselves bread, for they have nothing to eat,' He answered, 'Give ye them to eat,'" for "He was moved with compassion on them." He shows this humanitarian tenderness especially in His feeling for children, who represented to Him humanity in its helpless and passive state, as against the great overgrown oppressors in wealth and wickedness. "Whoso receiveth a little child," He says, "receiveth me." "Whoso shall receive one of such children in my name receiveth me."

He carried out this love for the people even to an extent not reciprocated by them; measuring His love not by their return but by their wants. Whether they espoused His cause or

not, He never ceased to espouse theirs. When His forerunners went to the villages of the Samaritans to make ready for Him, and the people would not receive Him, and when, in consequence, James and John asked that fire might be brought down from Heaven to destroy them, as in the time of Elias, He rebuked them, giving therein an answer good for all popular and revolutionary persecutors, whether in the name of religion or government: "Ye know not what spirit ye are of; I came not to destroy men's lives but to save them." And His last cry, when crucified, was that God would forgive the people who did it. The whole idea of Christ's appearance on earth, indeed, is, that He came to do men good because they had done Him wrong—a lesson which His persecuting followers have been slow to learn, except as a theory.

Jesus loved the people with such tenderness that it was said in His time, "Such love hath no man." He delighted, as we have seen, to be called the Son of Man, and to represent men's feelings and wants in His social conduct. "When thou makest a dinner, or a supper," He said, "call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither

thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbors ; * *
but when thou makest a feast call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind, and thou shalt be blessed." In the parable of the great supper, as we have seen, He commanded the calling in of the people, who had hitherto been excluded from such places to make room for the great. In the parables of the lost sheep and lost coin He teaches that there is more care, and should be more, for one that is lost or in want, than for the ninety and nine that are in comfort. The parable of the prodigal son, as well as the treatment of Mary Magdalene, and of the woman taken in adultery, is likewise a lesson of forgiveness and reception into favor of those who have fallen, or been distressed in society. He claims repeatedly that He came to "seek and to save the lost ;" and that His mission was wholly for the elevation "of them that sit in darkness and the shadow of death."

His miracles were nearly all done in the interest of the poor and unfortunate. He made bread to feed the hungry ; He healed the lame, the blind, the sick and the distressed, who were mostly beggars and unfortunates in society ; He

raised the widow's son and the mendicant Lazarus; He healed the leper; He drove the devils out of a poor beggar, and sent them into a rich man's hogs; and in relating the parable of the beggar Lazarus and the rich man, He had the beggar borne away to Heaven to rest in Abraham's bosom, and sent the rich man to hell; the only merit or demerit that we can discover in either being that the one was poor and begged, and the other rich and lived well. When John, in doubt and in prison, sent to Him to know whether He was really the Messiah that should come, or whether they should look for another, He sent back this reply: "Go tell John what things ye see; the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the dead are rised, and the poor have the Gospel preached to them."

And while Jesus had such an affection for the common people, and sympathy for their suffering, it was this class which, in turn, had a fondness for Him, and almost exclusively this class. "The blind, the lame and the halt," we are told, "came to the temple to see Him," and every where trooped around Him for sympathy

and aid ; while, on the other hand, "the priests were angry," and the wealthy stood aloof. "The common people," it is said, "heard Him gladly," and stood by Him when the authorities, ecclesiastical and civil, combined against Him.

For, it is said, "when the priests and rulers—church and state—went to the palace of the high priest, and consulted to kill Him, they were afraid to do it on a feast day, lest the *people* should make an uproar ;" and when they finally did get Him in their power it was not by taking Him openly, but by getting Judas to betray Him privately. The people were generally true to Christ, as He had been to them. The ecclesiastical and state authorities alone were responsible for His crucifixion ; notwithstanding the church has generally ascribed that crime to the people. "As He went through the country preaching the glad tidings of the kingdom of God," we are told that "the people gladly received Him." When the question was asked by Jesus, "Whom say they that I am?" and it was answered : "Some say Elias is risen from the dead, some say a prophet," and others make various answers, Jesus asked confidently, as

being of most importance, "Whom say the people that I am?" "And when the chief priests, scribes and elders sought to kill Him, they could not find what they might do because the *people* were very attentive to hear Him." Often did the people save His life; but never the ecclesiastics or the rulers. He owed His safety to the mob rather than to the police, the courts, or the clergy. And, be it ever said to the shame of the religious, that when the God whom they worshiped came to the earth to see them, the church itself caught Him and killed Him.

Such in general was the mutual affection of Jesus and the people, and such the popular character of the early Christian movement.

Like all popular or socialistic agitations, the Christian movement was, moreover, one in special opposition to riches, money-making, and business generally, these being the interests, as then conducted, that were most antagonistic to the people's welfare. It took grounds against hardship on debtors, against usury, and apparently against even the honest paying of debts, as well as against the classes who were wealthy,

enterprising, or in any way engaged in trade or commerce. This, more than anything else, characterizes the radicalness of early Christian socialism, or communism. Christ seemed to recognize the whole foundation of business as wrong, and to contemplate an entire reorganization of society—a reorganization resting on something like a community of goods and enterprises. At least His contemporaries could put no other meaning on His words. Of this, however, I shall speak hereafter.

I observe now, however, that, in contemplation of something better, He shows throughout His whole teachings a strong dissatisfaction with, and studied opposition to, wealth and property as then existing. "Take no thought," He says, "for your life, what ye shall eat or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Behold the fowls of the air; for they sow not, neither do they reap;" or, according to another Gospel, "Consider the ravens, which have neither storehouse nor barns; and yet your Heavenly Father feedeth them." "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin;

and yet I say unto you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore if God so clothed the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall He not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?"

He sought even to turn the people away from concern about the necessities of life, saying, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you. Take, therefore, no thought for the morrow, for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself;" and then, as if to enforce the idea that they should concern themselves only for the present, and to get through the passing day, He adds, "Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof"—*Carpe diem*, and leave the rest in unconcern. "What," He asks, "will it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" "Take heed and beware of covetousness," He further says, "for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." He then relates the parable of the foolish rich man, who had been industrious, and built

barns, and filled them well, and then proposed to retire and enjoy himself, or as he expressed it, to "eat, drink and be merry;" in which parable Jesus portrays the most honest and faultless conditions of wealth, and yet disapproves of it.

"Thou fool," He says, "this night thy soul shall be required of thee." "So," He continues, "is he that layeth up treasure, and is not rich toward God." "Lay not up for yourselves treasure upon earth," is His further advice, "for where your treasure is there will your heart be also." And He observes in commenting on the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, that the rich man had his good things in this life, and Lazarus will have his in the next; as if the same person could not have both. He commends those who have left "houses and lands for the kingdom of God's sake," and promises that 'they shall receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come, life everlasting."

The incompatibility of holding this world's goods and at the same time espousing His cause He often asserts. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." "Go sell that thou hast, and distribute to the poor, and thou shalt have

treasure in Heaven." To the ruler who had kept all His commandments from his youth up, but who was rich, He said, "Yet lackest thou one thing," which was to get rid of his riches. In explaining the parable of the sower, which was directed in part against wealth and the wealthy, He says, "The cares of the world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things choke the seed." "How hardly," He says at another time, "shall they which have riches enter the kingdom of Heaven. It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of Heaven." And in confining the kingdom and cause of Christ to the poor He says, "Blessed are ye poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. * * But woe unto you that are rich, for ye have received your consolation." "He hath filled the people with good things, and the rich He hath turned away empty."

St. James, an associate of Jesus, who enforced His teachings, wrote soon after this as follows: "Go to now, ye rich men; weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments

are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver is cankered, and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. Behold the hire of the laborers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth; and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts as in a day of slaughter, ye have condemned and killed the just, and he doth not resist you."

The practical measures which Christ proposed touching wealth were in the same spirit as these general views. To the ruler who came to Him desiring to enter His kingdom, He said, "Go sell all thou hast, and distribute to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in Heaven." "Lay not up for yourselves treasure upon earth," He said elsewhere, "where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal." He also counseled those who would lend money, to "lend expecting to receive nothing. If ye lend to them of whom ye hope to re-

ceive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as such again." He was opposed to usury, by which term He meant simply "interest," and condemned the receiving of money for the use of money in any shape, if not the receiving back of the principal itself. "There was a certain creditor," He relates with approval, "which had two debtors: the one owed him five hundred pence, and the other fifty, and when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both." "Take heed," is His perpetual caution, "and beware of covetousness;" as if this was the leading sin of His time.

So radical was His position understood to be in this matter, that it is related that "the Pharisees, who were covetous, derided Him." His views on money and money-making, on brokerage, and on business enterprises generally, were understood to be as decided and uncompromising as on any other subject, and such as called forth the condemnation and ridicule of moneyed and business men. On going into the temple, where brokers and sellers were at their work, He upset the tables of the money

changers, and drove out them that were trading and selling doves, and, like the socialist, Proud'hon, styled their business *theft*. "My house ye have made a den of thieves." *La propriete c'est le vol*. He commended the widow, however, who gave her mite; because in giving it "she gave of her substance," and gave all "she possessed." The apostles understood this feature of His movement to be socialistic, and availed themselves of their property sacrifices to challenge His admiration, and gain His favor. "Lord, we have forsaken all," they said, "What shall then be our reward?"

Christ exhibited also like the socialist of modern times, a decided hostility toward priests and their clerical supporters, who have ever been the foremost enemies of the social and liberal movements, and the conservative upholders of wealth and society in its existing forms. It was against these—the ecclesiastical authorities—that He had specially to contend. He hated the Pharisees in particular, who were the Jesuits of His time, and spoke of them much as the French socialists speak of these worthies now. The liberal men of no age have had confidence in priests.

Christ calls them "whited sepulchres full of dead men's bones;" "hypocrites, making for a pretence long prayers," and schemers choosing public places where they can make capital out of their devotions. "They bind," He says, "heavy burdens, grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders, but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. But they love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and chief places and greetings in public, and to be called Rabbi," a description which still applies to priests in the countries where the socialistic movements are mostly in progress; and where they are believed to give good advice, but not to follow it. "Now do ye, Pharisees," He continues, "make clean the outside of the cup and the platter, but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness. Ye tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God." "Woe unto you, Pharisees.

* * Woe unto you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for ye are as graves which appear not, and the men that walk over them are not aware of them." And again, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy."

He tells the people to do as they say, but not to do as they do. They suggested to Him, as He saw them going about like our fat priests, with their big bow-windowed fronts, that they had been devouring widows' houses.

Thus the movement of Christ was, in general, one against both the civil and the ecclesiastical institutions ; and the theories, passions, and impulses in it were those which generally accompany revolutions in the interest of the people.

CHAPTER II

CONTEMPLATED REVOLUTION

I observe next that there was, by reason of this movement, and from the first was expected to be, a great conflict, or clash of authorities; that Christ's kingdom was not deemed reconcilable with the existing temporal kingdoms, but was expected to usurp their authority, and supplant them; in other words, that the Christian movement was revolutionary in a political sense.

"Ye cannot," says Christ, "serve God and mammon," the Heavenly and the earthly kingdom. "No man can serve two masters; for either will he love the one and hate the other, or cling to one and despise the other." Ye cannot serve Christ and Cæsar. The disciples

were repeatedly instructed not to be conformed to the world, or existing state of things. (aioni touto).

Throwing off allegiance to Cæsar, they were opposed to paying taxes or showing any marks of submission. When the tax collector came, on one occasion, Peter bluntly refused to pay him, and Christ defiantly asked: "Do the kings of the earth take tribute from strangers, or from their children?" as much as to say: Let Cæsar get tribute from those who acknowledge Cæsar. Christians owe allegiance only to Christ. And once, to avoid difficulty, and yet not compromise principle, Peter took the tax money from a fish's mouth and passively allowed it to go to pay his and Christ's dues; much as the non-resistant Quakers and Menonites do who will not pay war or civil taxes, but peaceably allow the collector to "*take*" them.

The question was frequently asked by those who wished to embarrass Jesus or make Him commit Himself, "Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar?" a question which He always evaded by some such answer as, "Render to Cæsar what belongs to Cæsar; and to God what be-

longs to God," without making any concession to Cæsar. When He was accused before Pilate, one of the charges was, "We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar." In various ways was Christ's disloyalty and that of His followers toward the existing government believed at the time to be manifested. An argument made before Pilate by the Jews was: "If thou let this man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend. Whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Cæsar." When some of His followers were arrested, and brought before the rulers, it was said of them: "These all do contrary to the decrees of Cæsar; saying that there is another King, one Jesus; and they troubled the people and the rulers of the city, when they heard these things." Others testified against Stephen in a speech of certain foreigners, "Cyrenians, Alexandrians, Cilicians and others of Asia," that "they heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place, and change the customs which Moses delivered to us." It was popularly reported of Christ that He intended to "restore all things;" meaning to some the old Jewish monarchy, to others the

ancient Roman Republic and to others an entirely new form of society—in any event disloyalty to Cæsar.

Jesus seems to have excited the people against the laws generally, as well as against the monarchy and dynasty. He advised them not to go to court, but to compromise, or, if need be, to give up all their rights rather. "Agree with thine adversary," and keep out of the hands of the officer or judge, was His advice. "If any man take thy coat, give him thy cloak also." He had an unfavorable opinion of the law, as socialists now have, many of whom regard it as superfluous or oppressive, whence they are called "Anarchists." The lawyers are a class whom the socialists propose to abolish in their new system.

Christ would dispense with even the Jewish law, which He thought had been fulfilled in Him, and, having served its purpose, was now worthless. He would make it, therefore, give way, with all other civil authority, to His reorganization of society. "The Law and the Prophets," He said, "were until John; since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every

man passeth into it." And so, throughout all His teachings, He is ostensibly in open opposition to the existing governments and order of society.

It appears also that force was contemplated in this opposition, at least at first; so that a conflict of arms and blood were in prospect. An old kingdom and civilization cannot go down, and a new one arise, without war, war being the invariable condition of a change of dynasty, of form of government, or of basis of society. "I came," says Christ, "not to bring peace, but a sword." "The kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence; and the violent take it by force." "Suppose ye that I came to give peace on earth? Nay, but rather division. For from henceforth there shall be five in one house, divided, three against two, and two against three; father against son, and son against father; mother against daughter, and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law."

The disciples at one time secretly armed themselves, as if for a trial of their strength, or for making a nucleus of an army for their future operations. The impetuous Peter actually commenced to fight, and among other

exploits, cut off the ear of the high priest's servant. There was also at one time an open fight between the followers of Christ and others; for it is said of Barabbas, who was released, instead of Christ, at the crucifixion, that he was one "who had made insurrection with Jesus, and in the riot killed a person."

That Christ, or at least His followers, contemplated force in their proposed revolution, appears also from many other circumstances mentioned in the Gospels. At one time Jesus, in considering the difficulty and hopelessness of His task, arising from the apparent security of the then existing powers, said, in view of matching them with an equal force on His side, "When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are safe. But when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armor wherein he trusted, and divideth the spoils." And then, as if contemplating the universality of the conflict on both sides, He adds, "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth." He appeared to think that the whole world was to be involved in a con-



flict, as the Parisian socialists think with regard to their city issues, and that none were to be excluded from one side, except to be on the other.

The preparations for this war seem to have been carried on in the dark, and the signals and countersigns of the conspiracy to have been made "in an unknown tongue." They were to keep counsel, and watch for an opportunity. The kingdom of Heaven was to come "like a thief in the night." Speaking to His followers, Jesus said, "Blessed are those servants whom the Lord, when He cometh, shall find watching; and if He shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants; for know this, that if the good man of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through. Be ye, therefore, ready also, for the Son of Man cometh at an hour when ye think not."

He also advises prudent calculation, and a considerate weighing of their means, lest the project fail in a foolhardy enterprise. "For

which of you," He asked, "intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? or what king going to make war against another king sitteth not down and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand; or else sends an ambassador for peace?"

He further encouraged them to patience and the preservation of discipline. "Who, then," He asked, "is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season? Blessed is that servant whom his lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing. Of a truth I say unto you he will make him ruler over all that he hath. But if that servant say in his heart, 'My lord delayeth his coming,' and shall begin to beat the men servants and maidens, and to eat, and drink, and to be drunken, the lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers. And that servant which knew

his lord's will and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes, (military discipline); but he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, much shall be required; and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more. I am come to send fire upon the earth, and what will I if it be already kindled? But I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straightened till it be accomplished."

All this was said by Jesus to His disciples, and said in private. Then going to the people He addressed them on the same subject, but with more caution, and in enigmas. "When ye see a cloud rise up out of the west, straightway ye say there cometh a shower; and so it is. And when ye see the south wind blow, ye say, there will be heat; and it cometh to pass. Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky, and of the earth, but how is it that ye do not discern the signs of the times?"

In short, He let it be understood that there was to be a bloody conflict, which should go to

the heart of society, tearing asunder the family ties, and in which the closest alliances, whether of love or interest, should be disrupted. We have seen that father and son, and mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, were to be set at variance, as is always the case in civil war. "But it needs must be," He said; and the better to prepare the people for this unnatural warfare, He taught them to lift His cause above all other interests, and not to be diverted by any extremes of personal sacrifice to which it might lead. "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, mother, wife, and children, and brothers and sisters, he cannot be my disciple." He even required them to set it above life itself. "Whosoever shall save his life (in this cause) shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake shall save it."

In view of this red revolution, violence was, therefore, evidently anticipated, and such extremes of violence as characterized the French Revolution and the late Commune of Paris. Socialists have always resorted to extremes in measures, just as they have to extremes in theories and general aims. Their unbridled

thought and passion, their consciousness of wrongs suffered, and their inexperience in government and practical management, naturally lead them to this.

We accordingly find the early Christians preparing for a reign of terror; one which was subsequently realized in the triumph of Christianity, and the consequent wars of the Roman Empire, as well as in the dark ages which followed. Bloodshed, demolition of property, iconoclasm, and an unsparing overthrow of institutions was general in their program. The utterance of Christ, "the kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence," was enough to authorize such excesses in the public mind. War on synagogues, temples, statues and palaces was declared, like that of the Paris Commune against churches and royal residences. "Destroy this temple," says Christ, "and in three days I will build it;" conveying a threat which was understood literally, and was alleged against Him at His trial; though His followers tried in vain to explain it as symbolical, and as referring to the destruction and resurrection of His body; in vain, I say, for on another occasion, when

taken specially to see the temple, He said, "Verily I say unto you there shall not be left here one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down." Regicides and pontificides, in their warfare against the nobility and priests, have usually insisted that you must destroy the nests or the birds will come back again. Nero perhaps had some reason to charge the early Christians with the burning of Rome, although they have denied it, just as the Commune have denied the burning of Paris; for the latter say that the government did it, and charged it to the Commune to make the latter odious, and to give the authorities a pretext to punish them. The witnesses against one of Christ's disciples who was arrested, said, "We have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place." Christ's own words, too, gave color to such charges. "With what measure ye mete," He said, in sending out His disciples on what promised to be an errand of destruction, "it shall be measured to you again."

The work was decreed to be radical, and they were to spare nothing. "Do men," asks Christ, "put new wine into old bottles, or sew new

cloth on an old garment?" Instead of this, He says, "The axe is laid at the root of the tree;" and nothing of the old regime is to be left standing. In sending out His adherents, He further said that to those who should not receive them they should shake off the dust from their feet, and threaten that it shall be more tolerable in the day of judgment—a future reckoning day on earth, as they then understood—for Sodom and Gomorrah than for them. "Woe unto thee, Chorazin! Woe unto thee, Bethsaida!" He said, "And thou Capernaum, which art exalted to Heaven, shalt be cast down to hell; for if the mighty works which have been done in thee had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day!"

We have seen that Christ threatened to send fire upon the earth, and that after all these violent threats, which were generally made to the disciples only or else in parables to the public, "to whom it was not given to know the things of the kingdom of God," He found it necessary to tell them not to tell the people. On one occasion, when He had neglected this precaution, Peter expressly asked Him, "Lord,

speakest thou these things to us, or even to all?" in other words: Can we repeat these things; or are they among the secret or hidden things of the kingdom of God, which policy requires us to keep to ourselves?

The general destruction of life and property contemplated in the prosecution of their designs seemed to be ever present to the mind of Christ, and to trouble Him. When told of some Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with the sacrifices, and of the eighteen on whom the tower of Siloam fell, He said, "Unless ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." The sufferings of the people under the old regime, and the turning of the scales and consequent suffering of their oppressors, is further set forth in the parable of the unjust judge and the widow. "And shall not God avenge His own elect, who cry day and night unto Him? Verily I say unto you, He will avenge them speedily." Destruction was certain, terrible and immediately before His eyes.

On approaching Jerusalem He wept in view of its coming desolation, and said, "O Jerusalem! Jerusalem! thou that killest the prophets,

and stonest them that are sent unto thee! how often would I have gathered thy children together as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold your house is left unto you desolate." Referring to the same calamity, He says: "As for these things which ye behold, the days will come in which there shall not be left one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down;" or, according to another gospel, "If thou hadst known, even thou, in this thy day, the things which belong to thy peace, but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee around, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another, because thou knowest not the day of thy visitation."

And when they asked Him saying, "Master, when shall these things be?" He answered, "Be not deceived * * The time draweth near. But when ye shall hear of wars and enmities, be not deceived, for these things must first

come to pass, but the end is not by and by.

* * Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences, and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from Heaven. * * In patience possess ye your souls. And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh."

And then follows a scene which would adequately describe the reign of the Paris Commune: "Then let those which are in Judea flee to the mountains, and let them which are in the midst of it depart out, and let not them which are in the countries enter thereunto. For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled." "But woe unto those that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days, for there shall be great distress in the land and wrath upon the people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations, and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. And there shall be signs in the

sun, and in the moon, and in the stars, and upon the earth distress of nations with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring, men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after the things which are coming upon the earth; for the powers of Heaven shall be shaken, and then shall they see the Son of Man coming in a cloud (or army), with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, for your redemption draweth nigh."

And when the women who followed Him up Calvary to the crucifixion bewailed Him, He said, "Daughters of Jerusalem weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. For behold the days are coming in the which they shall cry, 'Blessed are the barren and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck.' Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, 'Fall on us!' and to the hills, 'Cover us!'"

Such was the reign of terror which the early Christian movement threatened as the probable result of the struggle between the antagonistic powers for the supremacy.

This anticipated violence and lawlessness on the part of the new sect or party naturally attracted the attention of the rulers, and called out their interposition; which fact itself—the interposition of the state against the early Christians—is further evidence that the conduct and schemes of the latter were regarded as insurrectionary and as civil offences.

Christ Himself expected this interposition, and prophesied to His followers, "Ye shall be brought before governors and kings," and "Ye shall all be hated for my name's sake." And He advised them, under such circumstances, "When persecuted in one city to flee to another," and "when brought unto the synagogues and unto magistrates and powers to take no thought what to say," knowing that socialists and reformers never lack for words in defence of their course.

It is recorded of Christ, that "He was numbered among the transgressors." He was particularly charged as being an insurrectionist. "He stirreth up the people." Pilate says of Him at His trial, "Ye have brought this man unto me as one that perverteth the people;" or, as

elsewhere related, His accusers say: "We have found this man perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar"—a charge not unlike that preferred against Socrates, that "he corrupted the youth and made the worse appear the better reason." And when one Jason was arraigned for having entertained the apostles, and was brought with them before the rulers, it was said: "Those that have turned the world upside down have come hither also, whom Jason hath received; and these all do contrary to the decrees of Cæsar, (the emperor himself it seems had taken alarm and interdicted the movement by decree) saying that there is another King, one Jesus. And they troubled the people and rulers of the city when they heard these things."

The Jews recognizing the insurrectionary character of the Christian movement, urged before Pilate, "If thou let this man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend. Whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Cæsar." And more than once Christ Himself was asked, "By what authority doest thou these things." The Romans arrested His disciples for teaching, as they

expressed it, what is "not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe," and gave it as their experience of them that "These men do exceedingly trouble our city." In fact everything tends to show that Christ was understood at the time as instigating a lawless movement, having for its object a civil revolution.

As might be expected in view of such contemplated violence and general clash of authorities, the rulers were strongly arrayed against the early Christians. Officials interested in preserving the peace and stability of society, have always been the opponents and persecutors of socialism and socialists. Kings and aristocrats, especially, knowing that if the socialists should gain their ends they would be the first to fall, have always been intolerant of their radicalism. The recent legislation in France, Germany, Russia and other countries against the internationalists, socialists, nihilists and similar classes is an illustration of this. So Christ and the apostles were resisted by the united authorities of their time. "The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord and against His

Christ. For of a truth, against the holy child Jesus whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel were gathered together; and now, Lord, behold their threatenings." "The chief priests, scribes, and chiefs of the people," it is elsewhere related, "sought to kill Him;" and the arrests both of Himself, and of His followers, and the prohibition of their preaching are among the most common narrations of the Gospels and Acts of the Apostles.

Jesus had all this in contemplation, and taught His followers to expect it as they propagated His cause. "I send you," He said, "as lambs among wolves." "Ye shall be brought before rulers and kings for my sake." Like Rochefort, Louis Blanc, Raspail, Most, and every other socialistic leader, "He was numbered among the transgressors." When certain of the common people, supposed to have good sense, and to be of a law-abiding disposition, espoused His cause, the Pharisees, in trying to dissuade them, said: "Are ye also deceived? Have any of the *rulers* believed on Him?" showing that it was a popular but not a loyal movement.

As indicating how they stood at the court, Herod's step-daughter, instructed by her mother, asked for the head of John the Baptist in a charger, a request not unlike some made by Eugenie and other favorites at the French court under the late empire—requests, for example, that some friend should challenge and kill in duel the most dangerous of the opposition. The example of Herodias will ever remain as an illustration of court refinement, which in several other respects has its counterpart in the modern persecutions of radicals. While the job was put up in Herod's own house, he procured it to be published abroad that he was sorry, and that he had been personally opposed to it, but reluctantly yielded because he had made a promise, or was caught by a sort of "philapoena" or pledge. And here we may observe, too, that it incidentally leaks out that John the Baptist had taken up the popular scandal against royalty, and was making capital out of it for his cause, just as the communists and opposition in all royal countries do to-day; for they hold up *ad nauseam* the corruption and illicit amours of men and women at court in

order to create popular indignation against them. *La vertu c'est plutot dans la chaumierre que dans le palais.* If, therefore, Herodias adopted the measures of Eugenie, Isabella, or the Prince of Wales, she had the same provocation as these, namely, the exposing of her unchastity by a political opponent.

The opposition of the rulers, however, went farther than this indirect opposition. They crucified Christ Himself, as they subsequently did many of His followers. And, not satisfied with killing Him, they added indignity to death, as in the case of Cromwell and Robespierre, in order to destroy the effect of His example. A crown of thorns was put upon His head, in satiric recognition of His royalty, and over Him was written in all the languages that His followers could read, "This is the King of the Jews." And, hooting Him to His death in the same vein of mock allegiance, they cried, "Hail King of the Jews!" *Vive le roi!* the under current of all which was *Sic semper aemulis.*

There was a similar opposition on the part of the priests to the Christian movement, just as there was on the part of the Christians to

the priests. The clergy and the church have always opposed socialistic movements, being even to-day the most violent and bitter antagonists of the communists of France, Russia and other countries.

For, next to the governmental officials, the clergy would lose most by the realization of the commune, being destined in such event to be swept away, like the nobility, supported as they are by the government, and living, like parasites, off the people. Feeling, furthermore, that to them are committed the interests of the existing society, they recognize all such agitators as their especial enemies. If Christ should come to the earth to-day in the same capacity as before, He would in all probability be taken by the priests and treated as He was then, so far have His "representatives" drifted away from their master.

At all events we are told that while the people generally accepted Christ, "the Pharisees and lawyers rejected His views." In prophesying concerning His future, Jesus said that He "must be rejected of elders and chief priests and scribes;" and, as we have already seen, the

priests in dissuading the people against Him, asked, "Are ye also deceived? Have any of the rulers or Pharisees believed on Him?" It is elsewhere related that "the high priests laid hold on the apostles, and put them in the common prison." And as Jesus went about doing good, and was favorably received by the people, it is said "that the priests were angry" at His success. When a conspiracy was raised against Him, it was not only participated in by the priests, but instigated in the metropolitan residence: "They went to the palace of the high priest and consulted to kill Him." They would have killed Him earlier than they did were it not for the people who threatened resistance. "They were afraid to kill Him on the feast day, lest the people should make an uproar." Instead, therefore, of choosing a public holiday, when the people, being at leisure and crowding the streets, would have defeated their purpose, they got Judas to betray Him privately, that, like the Prince of Orange, He might be despatched with certainty and yet with safety to themselves. It was the priests who accused Him, and insisted on His death; for the reproach can

never be laid to the charge of the people that they killed their God of their own accord; but they were led on by the priests, as when they recently killed a missionary in Mexico, and as has always been done when the mob has hunted down heretics.

There was a like opposition to the Christian movement on the part of the lawyers, who are generally conservative, non-progressive, and opposed to innovations and agitations. They opposed Christ not so much from hostility to His religion, as from lack of sympathy with it, and from fear of the probable unsettling of property titles and money interests, which His cause threatened. For, just as the priests have always thought that to them is committed the security of religion, the lawyers have thought that in their hands is placed the security of property. Among the reforms proposed by the modern socialists, and in particular by the communists, is, as we have seen, one to do away with lawyers as the next worst class after the nobility and the priests.

Christ was, accordingly, severe on the lawyers, and the lawyers on him. When He was once

denouncing in general terms all classes of His opponents, the evangelist relates, "Then said one of the lawyers to Him, 'Master, thus speaking, thou reproachest us also.' And He said, 'Woe unto you also, ye lawyers, for ye laden men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burden with one of your fingers.'" And, again, He said, "Woe unto you lawyers, for ye have taken away the key of knowledge; ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered;" referring evidently to the common recognition by the lawyers of the falsity and rottenness of the existing religion and society, and their unwillingness nevertheless to do or favor anything looking toward the needed social revolution. It is elsewhere said that "the Pharisees and lawyers rejected His views."

In the characteristic speech of Gamaliel, we have the representative lawyer, sitting on the fence, trying to be non-committal, and giving conservative advice to both sides. It was when the apostles, who had just escaped from prison, were arrested again, and the priests were counselling what to do with them. "Ye men of

Israel," said Gamaliel, "take heed to yourselves what ye intend to do touching these men;" and then, bringing up his precedents, he continues, citing first the case of one "Theudas, boasting himself to be somebody, to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves; who was slain, and all, as many as obeyed him, were scattered and brought to nought. And after this rose up Judas of Galilee, in the days of the taxing, and drew away much people after him; he also perished, and all, even as many as obeyed him, were dispersed. And now I say unto you, refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel, or this work, be of men, it will come to nought, but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it, lest haply ye be found even to fight against God."

Paul, too, though converted to Christianity, still retained the conservatism which characterized him as a lawyer (and disciple of Gamaliel); and to him, as we shall presently show, is due a great change in the political character of Christianity; counselling, as he did, submission to the powers that be, and a recognition of the

existing state of society, even to its aristocracy and slavery.

CHAPTER III

POLITICAL PROPAGATION

I have thus far shown that early Christianity was a revolutionary movement, undertaken in the interest of the people, and have indicated how it was received by the different classes of society. I shall speak next of the propagation for this revolution, and for the new kingdom which was to follow.

It was a long dreary outlook to the disciples, to expect with a handful of forces, to subject the world to their idea and their practical system. Yet nothing less than this was their aim. We accordingly find Christ repeatedly encouraging them with assurances that the kingdom will ultimately come. Though its beginning is small, He tells them that it will increase. He

compares it to a grain of a mustard seed, which will grow to great proportions in time, and to leaven hid in meal, which however insignificant, will yet leaven the whole lump of society. It may not be this month, or this year, or this generation, but it will be. "One soweth and another reapeth," He says; and He promises that there shall be a harvest, and a harvest home.

He asks them, accordingly, like all idealists, to look to the future for its realization, and in the mean time to labor and wait for it. Like the communists of to-day, few and persecuted, poor and powerless, who to a man believe that in time their system will prevail in all the world, this hope sustained the early Christians. For it is not, in either case, the existing state of the cause that retains them in such enterprises. Something more and different was to follow. 'Fear not, little flock," says Christ, "for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." "All things are delivered unto me by my Father," He continues, and assures them, like Paul, that all things are theirs, and they are Christ's. Though Christ is "to be rejected

of men, and of the high priests and powers," He promises that "the rejected stone is to become the chief of the corner," and that the stone cut without hands in the mountains is to grow until it covers the whole earth.

And not only is every assurance given that this kingdom will certainly come, but that it will come soon. There is abundant evidence in the Gospels that it was expected at once. The apostles and some others had already begun to ask for the offices and good places for themselves and their friends. The mother of Zebedee's children came with her two sons, and wanted to bespeak for each a position near Christ in power—one to sit on the right, and the other on the left of His throne. In sending out His agents to work, Jesus assures them that, though they "shall be brought before governors and kings for His sake," and shall be punished, they shall immediately after be compensated with places of power. Advising them "when persecuted in one city to go to another," He assures them that "the Son of God will come before they get round the cities of Israel." "There be some standing here," He says,

"which shall not taste death till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom."

He thinks He foresees the near triumph of His cause foreshadowed in the state of society which had already begun to be produced, and asks His hearers in astonishment if they "cannot discern the signs of the times." "Say not there are yet four months, and then cometh the harvest. Behold I say unto you, lift up your eyes and look on the fields, for they are white already to harvest." "The kingdom of Heaven is at hand," He says, and He orders them to be ready for action at any time. They know not how soon He may call upon them to execute His designs. The exact hour is, indeed, not made known, which would only defeat the outbreak; but the fact of its near approach is declared. "It is not for you to know," He says, "the times nor the seasons that the Father has put in His power," The kingdom of Heaven is to come "like a thief in the night." Counsel must, accordingly, be kept secret, as in all similar cases. "The kingdom of Heaven," He says, "cometh not with observation." "Be ye therefore ready," He adds, "for the Son of Man

cometh at an hour when ye think not," and "Blessed are those servants whom the Lord, when He cometh shall find watching."

Every means was used to induce men to enter this cause, and to commit themselves openly and unreservedly to its advancement. Promises, threats, and, perhaps, even force were employed. "Whoso," says Christ, "confesseth me before men, him will I confess before my Father." In other words, patronage in the future kingdom is offered for present work for it, just as it is offered in France and Spain to-day where the Bonapartists and Carlists make all kinds of promises about what they will do when their cause is enthroned. "Enter in," says Christ, "at the strait gate," while the company is small, and the way comparatively difficult, for when the cause becomes popular, your services will not be so sorely needed, and you will not be rewarded to so great an extent. "Many shall come hereafter," He says, when the offices are all given out, "and shall not be able to enter." He required everybody to work for Him, and would take no excuse, not even a delay to bury one's father, support his wife, improve his land,

or train his oxen. His command to all was, "Take up your cross and follow me."

The propagation was to be on an elaborate and all-comprehensive plan. Not satisfied with the acquisition of a few cities, He says: "I must preach the Gospel to other cities also;" and He advises His followers, as we have seen, when persecuted in one city to go to another. Ultimately it was, He said, to be preached to all the world.

It was also to be cautious and prudent. As His disciples proceeded in their work He cautioned them to study well their men and means, to observe the signs of the times, and to take the current at its flood. Now He charged them to proclaim His kingdom openly and to all, and now He told them to tell no man that He was the Christ. That is, they were to sometimes conceal His designs, and sometimes make a bare breast of them. Frequently His disciples, on learning His purposes, had to ask whether they were to be kept secret or made known. "Lord," said Peter on one such occasion, "speakest thou this parable unto us, or even to all?" He generally spoke plainly to

His disciples, but in parables to the public; though some things He dared not let even His disciples know. "It is not for you to know the times nor the seasons which the Father hath put in His power." Comparing the ushering in of His kingdom to the coming of a thief in the night, He thinks it is not safe to let too much be known; for, says He, "This know, that if the good man of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through."

Knowing what Christ's ambition was, and believing that all means open and secret, and good and bad, were being used to attain it, the devil, (we will not say what power is intended by this representation,) offered to secure for Him His object, including the subjection of the whole world to Him for a kingdom, if He would enter into an alliance with him, and fall down and worship him, that is, if Christ would acknowledge him as his superior, and take Himself a second place under him; a proposition which Christ rejected with scorn, and insisted that the devil should stand after Him:

"Get thee behind me, Satan;" God only will I serve as a superior. To one not believing in the divine purity of Christ, this interview with the devil will appear like a consultation with evil spirits with a view to help Him to get the kingdom. He went up into a mountain for the purpose, and went expressly "to be tempted of the devil," much as Saul went to the witch of Endor, and as ambitious and anxious men and women often go now to witches and clairvoyants to get the aid of the unseen world for their projects. Christ's open means seem all justifiable, but His secret means have never been made known, so that a sceptic may naturally doubt their legitimacy.

In the parable of the unjust steward we have a similar hint that He conciliated all parties, and made use of all means, just and unjust, to promote His cause. This parable pictures the steward of a great man, who, being about to be dismissed, went to his master's debtors and settled their accounts at a loss to the master, his object being to put the debtors under obligation to himself. He offered to scale their debts forty and fifty per cent. for cash, allowing

one, for example, who owed his master one hundred measures of oil to make it fifty, and one who owed him fifty measures of wheat to make it thirty, (pocketing no doubt part of the difference). He thought to thus make friends enough among his master's debtors to support him when out of employment. Jesus cites this example with apparent approval, and advises His disciples to do likewise. "Make ye to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness," He says, "that when ye fail they may receive you into everlasting habitations." This, doubtless, meant to His hearers that, in propagating His cause, they should not only make use of dishonest means, as well as of honest, but also enter into compacts with all parties, even their opponents, so that if they should fail they might not be left without support or position under the adverse regime; in other words that they should be ready to compromise, if compelled thereto as a last resort; as much as to say: if you cannot carry the cause of Christ, be on good terms with Cæsar, so that when you must give up you can get a second best place under him for selling out. It is like Napoleon the Third's

policy, who, though he had every interest in the empire, still laid up in the Bank of England a few millions on which to retire in case of failure. Use all means, says Christ, in effect, and in the meanwhile keep a way of retreat open for the contingency of non-success. For "if ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?" It is a kind of Jesuitism, or making of one's self all things to all men, on the ground that the end justifies the means. I do not think that this was Christ's settled policy, or that He wholly justified such proceedings; but His followers evidently understood Him in this sense, as have some of His followers since, and as they do even to-day.

But not only were promises and trickery to be used in the propagation of Christ's enterprise, but also threats, and perhaps even force. "To those who do not receive you," He says, "shake the dust off your feet, and say to them that it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for them." "Woe unto thee, Chorazin! Woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works which

are done in you were done in Sodom and Gomorrah, they would have repented long ago in sack-cloth and ashes." "And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted to Heaven, shalt be cast down to hell." In inviting all into the movement they are to excuse none. We have seen in the parable of the great supper that neither the man who had a father to bury, nor he who had just married a wife, nor he who had bought land or cattle, had sufficient excuse to stay away. The disciples were ordered to go out into the highways and hedges, and to compel them to come in. The one alternative is to take up this cause or be damned. "Go and proclaim my system to all the world," is the substance of His recruiting commission; "and he that accepteth it, and taketh the badge of baptism, (the sign of enrollment or entrance into His cause) shall be saved, and he that does not shall be ruined in the convulsion that is to follow."

No matter what stood in the way, the people were to give up all for His cause. When Peter said, "Lo, we have left all and followed thee," Jesus answered, "Verily, I say unto you there

is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and the world to come life everlasting." He says that those who think more of their parents or property than of His movement are not worthy of Him. They must not even count their lives dear in His cause. "Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it, and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it."

He warns them, in this propagation, not to be turned back by the terrors that will follow, of which I have already spoken; "for these things must needs come," they being the means, or, at least, the regular attendants, of all revolutions. "When nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, when earthquakes and famines and troubles shall come; when ye shall be delivered up to counsels, and be beaten in the synagogues, and shall be brought before rulers and kings for my sake, then be ye not troubled. For the Gospel must first be published among all nations." He predicts even that "the brother shall betray

the brother to death, and the father the son; and the children shall rise up against their parents, and shall cause them to be put to death." And He adds, "Ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake (very likely), but he that shall endure to the end, the same shall be saved."

The desolation spoken of by Daniel, He says, will come in the wake of this movement, when those that are in Judea, as we have already quoted, may well flee to the mountains; when those that are on the house-top shall not come down; when those that are with child and give suck shall sorrow; when they may well pray that their flight be not in the winter; when "there shall be affliction such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created, unto this time, nor ever shall be; when unless the Lord should shorten the days, no flesh should be saved; when the sun shall be darkened, and the moon not give her light; when the stars of Heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in Heaven shall be shaken."

They are, however, to hold on their way amid all this warring of the social elements and apparent chaos of the new birth of empires.

"For as the lightning that lighteneth out of the one part under the Heaven, shineth unto the other part under Heaven, so shall also the Son of Man be in His day." Having put their hands to the plow, they are not to turn back for anything, but are to remember Lot's wife, and continue in their onward course, face forward, though cities be burning behind them and whole peoples perishing in their wake.

In the midst of such measures of propagation it is not remarkable that the cause spread. Meetings were held almost daily, sometimes in private houses and secret places for consultation, and sometimes in the synagogues and open air for popular agitation. The day of Pentecost was a field day, when a great mass meeting was held not unlike those of the crusaders at Ratisbon and Clermont, for canvassing and enrolling recruits. Five thousand people are said to have joined them on that one day, making a day like that in France when, in the first revolution, the Marsellaise hymn was first sung, which is said to have gained one hundred thousand people to the republican cause.

CHAPTER IV

SOCIALISTIC IDEALS

The object of this movement, as we have seen, was the elevating of the lower classes, and—since this was to be done by purely social means—the consequent bringing down of the higher; the bettering of the condition of the poor and miserable, and—since there was to be no new production for this, but only a rearrangement of the social relations—the consequent despoiling of the rich and great. The principles underlying the movement were, as in all socialistic movements, equality, fraternity and community. I shall, therefore, set forth these principles in turn, as embodied in Christ's cause, whether contemplated by Him in all their fullness or not.

Nothing was more plainly taught by Jesus than

the equality of all men. In His system there were to be no high, no low; no rich, no poor; no Jew, no Greek; no distinctions of race or blood; no differences of prospect or condition. His Gospel was the same for all, His moral precepts were for all, His promises and threats were for all. With the same regularity that death came to all, came the duties and obligations of Christianity to all. Christ was a thorough republican in principle, and an uncompromising friend of equality in its remotest consequences.

After condemning the Pharisees who liked "the chief places and greetings in public, and to be called Rabbi," (master), He said, "Be ye not called Rabbi, for one is your master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren. Neither be ye called master, for one is your master, even Christ." Herein was the chief difference between His proposed social system and that of the existing governments and their aristocratic upholders. "Ye know," He said, "that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you. But whosoever shall be great among you, let him

be your minister, and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant." The leaders of the people in Christ's cause are not called "princes," "generals," "masters," or "priests," nor are they dignified by any aristocratic or official titles whatever, but simply called "ministers," or "servants," suggesting the leveling title of the French revolutionists—citizen—and showing that in Christ's opinion supremacy is not in the rulers, but in the people. "If any man desires to be first," says Christ, "the same shall be least of all, and the servant of all."

Speaking of Himself, who was expected to come in great splendor, He said, "What went ye out to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold they which are gorgeously appareled and live delicately are in king's courts," that is, belong to a monarchical regime, altogether inconsistent with republican simplicity. He discouraged the putting on of gold and costly ornaments and apparel, as being too aristocratic. John the Baptist, His ambassador, who sounded the key-note of his master's policy, came clothed in camel's hair and leather; and Christ Himself, when He made His only entry of state,

came riding on a jackass, with the simplicity of Jefferson at his inauguration, or of Franklin at the French court.

According to Christ, God is no respecter of persons, and no difference should be allowed in His government. None are to be high, none low; none foreign, none native; none Jew, none Greek; none master, none servant; but the equality of mankind is to be universal and cosmopolitan. "He hath made of one blood all nations for to dwell on the face of the earth;" and His disciples are asked to call no man "common" or "unclean."

He even puts Himself in the category of common citizenship, and declares His equality with all men. He approves the affirmative answer of His disciples made to the inquiry, "Are ye able to drink of the cup that I drink, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" saying in addition, "Ye shall, indeed, drink of the cup that I shall drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with."

In choosing His apostles, or chief counselors and ministers, He took them not from the great

or titled, but from laboring men, fishermen and tax-collectors. He moved in the society of Mary, Martha, Lazarus and the poor of the little towns and villages of Judea, instead of the rich of the metropolis. He went among publicans and sinners, and if occasionally He was found among Pharisees and wealthy professionals, it was with perfect indifference to their rank.

He makes it the reproach of the Pharisees, as we have seen, that they assume a superiority over others, that "they love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and chief places and to be called master;" that they impose heavy duties on others, and, instead of submitting to the same themselves, in the spirit of equality, do not do so much as touch them with one of their fingers

So radical was Christ's view of equality understood to be, that when the centurian came to have his servant healed, and Christ proposed to go to his house and heal him the centurian declined, saying, "I am not worthy that you should come into my house, for I am one under authority, having soldiers under me, (a

man of rank), and say to one man, Go, and he goeth, and to another, Do this, and he doeth it," and so am not republican enough for you.

In sending His disciples out He tells them to salute no man by the way ; as if in Quaker-like simplicity He would not have them so much as take off their hats to a fellow man, but show all the same simple respect ; or, with the prejudice of the French socialists, would not so much as have them say, "Mr." or "Sir," but simply "yea," "yea," and "nay," "nay;" or "citizen," and "friend."

He taught the doctrine of equality and of equal deserts notwithstanding all differences in character and service. In the parable of the laborers in the vineyard He enforces the principle that whether you have upon you the deserts of the third, the sixth, the ninth, or the eleventh hour, you should yet receive your meed of equality, honor and respect in the kingdom of Christ.

Jesus took special pains also to condemn all actual inequalities then existing, even to the remotest consequences of His doctrine. No socialist could go farther in pointing out trivial

inconsistencies in those who pretended to practice equality, or who thought they were already acting fully up to the doctrine. As long as you make your servant inferior to yourself, say they, or debar him from your table or family, you are no true republican; and Jesus says, reproving a similar lack of republicanism among the socialists: "But which of you having a servant plowing or feeding cattle will say unto him, by and by, when he is come from the field, 'Go and sit down to meat;' and will not rather say to him, 'Make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself and serve me, until I have eaten and drunken, and afterward thou shalt eat and drink;'" in opposition to all of which He further says in illustration of the proper doctrine of equality, that He Himself will make them sit down at meat, while He, the master, will gird Himself and serve them.

And elsewhere it is related: "And there was a strife among them which of them should be accounted the greatest. And He said unto them, The kings of the earth exercise lordship over them, and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye shall not

be so ; but he that is greatest among you shall be as the younger ; and he that is chief as he that doth serve. For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth ? Is not he that sitteth at meat ? But I am among you as he that serveth."

He made himself an illustrious example of this principle of equality, as of all His teachings, an example which only a prominent man can give. "The Son of Man," He said, "came not to be ministered unto, but to minister. He taught not only the equality of all men, but the theory that the rulers and chiefs are the servants of those whom they rule, (or serve, rather), public servants, not kings, lord's or masters, and He gave the name of ministers, and not rulers, to those whom He appointed to the more responsible positions in His work.

He explicitly taught that all government is for the ruled ; that the ruler, instead of aggrandizing himself by his position, should sacrifice himself for the people ; in all of which He was also an example. He lived and died for the people, like Codrus, Curtius and Winkelried.

When His disciples, anxious about preferment,

asked who should be greatest in the kingdom of Heaven, He took a child, and placed it in their midst, and said, "Whoso shall humble himself as this little child, the same shall be the greatest;" and the tender words, "Suffer little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of Heaven," struck a blow at the pretensions of governmental superiority; maintaining, as they did, that the requisite qualifications of citizenship in the new kingdom of righteousness, should be unpretentious, child-like equality. "Unless ye become as this little child," He says elsewhere, "ye cannot enter the kingdom of Heaven." Ambition in this kingdom will always overleap itself, and fall into the opposite degradation. "Every one that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

Christ did not even approve of His disciples calling Him "good master." "There is one good" (master), He says, "and that is God." Nor would He, in turn, recognize any one else as master, or show homage except as to an equal. When the devil tried to induce Him to bow down and worship him, that is, to show him

deference as a superior, He declined to do so, though all the kingdoms of the world were offered to Him for such subjection. For it was then that He uttered the general republican sentiment, "Thou shalt worship (or show homage to) the Lord, thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve," not kings, nobles, potentates, or men in any capacity.

He guarded at the same time against the *reductio ad absurdum* of this principle. The advocates of equality often carry their doctrine to the extent of raising the lower classes so high as to place them above the upper classes, putting these latter under as lower classes; just as the advocates of liberty sometimes claim liberty even to enslave others, (as in the southern states before our war), or claim the right to take away others' rights. It was thus that the French revolutionists tore off the disabilities of the people to impose them on their opponents, exchanging the reign of Louis XVI for the reign of terror. It was thus that the Roundheads resisted the despotism of the monarchy of Charles I to adopt that of Cromwell; and it was thus that the Puritans resisted

religious persecution to the extent of persecuting their persecutors.

It is somewhat the tendency of all socialistic sympathizers to think that the laboring man, the poor, the "strikers" the common people, in short, should rule, even to the exclusion of the equal rights of capitalists and others. An Irishman once expressed his idea of equality thus: "One man is as good as another and sometimes better." Christ says, in restraint of such extremes of application, and at the same time as recognizing the principle of equality above laid down, "The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. It is enough for the disciple to be as his master, and the servant that he be as his lord," or as it is elsewhere expressed, "The disciple is not above his master, but every one that is perfect (in his social relations) shall be as his master."

Fraternity is another doctrine dearly held by all socialists, and which also appears prominent in the Christian cause. Socialists have much to say about the brotherhood of man, the universality of love, the cosmopolitan character of duty. Their schemes have always been for great

ameliorations of the whole race—for universal republics, international compacts and arbitration, the equality of all nations and races, as well as of all men, for equal national as well as equal individual rights. This is the object of the internationalists of to-day, who seek to bring about ultimately the United States of Europe and a general community of all the world.

Christ fully appreciated this sentiment of fraternity, and inculcated it on every available occasion, as did His adherents also for Him; and they did it in face of the prejudices of the Jews among whom they lived. "For God hath made of one blood," it was said, "all nations for to dwell on the face of the earth." God is represented as no respecter of persons. "There is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, but one in Christ." The parable of the good Samaritan was given by Jesus to specially illustrate and enforce this doctrine; showing that a man belonging to a race most hated by the Jews, but good and kind to a Jew, was better than the priest and the Levite—the most sacred class of the Jews—who passed him by;

that the Samaritan, the stranger, and the foreigner are all neighbors, and that this extent of application must be given to the term "neighbor" in the command, "Love thy neighbor as thyself;" that man is a citizen of the world, and should have sympathy for all peoples, no matter what their race, nationality, or creed.

He broke down the barriers of the old religion, by which it had been confined as the religion of the Jews. His religion was for the Gentiles also. He expounded it Himself to the Samaritan woman, notwithstanding His Jewish followers "wondered that He spake to her." His chief minister, Paul, was sent out as *par excellence* the apostle of the Gentiles. Peter was instructed against his prejudices by a "sheet let down from Heaven," and made to learn that foreign people, like forbidden beasts and birds, were not "common" or "unclean." Christ mingled and ate with publicans and sinners. Some of His apostles were aliens, being chosen promiscuously from several nationalities. Medes, Parthians, Romans, all races were admitted to the church on the day of Pentecost; and by the "tongues of fire" His disciples were

empowered to preach His cause in all languages to all peoples. The announcement to the shepherds at His first coming was a proclamation of this idea: "Fear not, for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people."

One of the loveliest things ever said is the approval by Christ of those who pity and befriend man in any capacity, or in any place: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." It is Christ's note of introduction, put into the hand of every member of humanity, introducing him to every Christian he may meet; and containing the sentiment that the favor shown to such person, stranger or unfortunate though he be, will be taken as a personal favor to Christ—the ordinary sentiment conveyed in our polite forms of introduction to-day.

Concerning the other socialistic ideal, "community," I shall speak specially in the next chapter.

CHAPTER V

PRACTICAL COMMUNISM

I. COMMUNITY OF GOODS—The principal idea, however, contained in socialism is that of community—a community of goods and enterprises. The socialists of all ages have aimed to so organize men that there should be no rich, and no poor ; that none should have anything, and none want anything ; but that all should labor and produce, and all be satisfied and happy ; a state where the title to everything should be in the whole, and every one should be an equal part of the whole ; where all should labor for each, and each for all ; each contributing according to his capacity, and receiving according to his wants. They would make the state a family workshop, and the whole world a confederation of



communes, in which none should labor, as now, for the benefit of rich capitalists, but all work for themselves and for all others at the same time.

There is much in the words of Jesus, and still more in those of His disciples, to indicate that this ideal was contemplated, and its realization attempted as the object of the promised kingdom of Christ. I shall, accordingly, for the balance of this essay present what seems to be a strong case for the communism of Christ, which, however, can be maintained with consistency only on the theory of a gradual modification and subsequent reaction such as are common to all similar movements.

Something like a complete communistic idea, I say, was entertained, if not by Christ at least by His followers. The utterances of Jesus were communistic on their face, and, when pushed to their farthest consequences, as they evidently were by His followers, they ended in something like modern Icarian communism. Let us see how naturally this was done.

The four leading principles in this idea of socialism, (the Icarian) are: 1. that there shall

be no property ; 2. that all men shall be provided for ; 3. that each shall, for this purpose, contribute according to his ability and receive according to his wants ; and, 4. that all shall labor and all serve in equal honor.

All these ideas were more or less clearly set forth by Jesus, or at least by His immediate followers ; and an effort was made to carry them into practical realization as the outcome of His system.

The chief and the most difficult object to be obtained was the abolition of wealth. The principal opposition to communism has always come from the rich, and because of their riches. The poor have generally been ready to abandon their little, especially when there has been a prospect of getting more. Jesus had no difficulty in persuading fishermen and tax-gatherers to surrender their petty possessions ; but when He came to the wealthy He met insuperable obstacles.

He accordingly directed His efforts against wealth ; condemning it as an evil and teaching men to fear it as a danger, alleging, as His experience proved, that it is easier to get a

camel through the eye of a needle than a rich man into the kingdom of God. To the rich young man who applied for admission to His cause, and who had already proved his good moral character, He said, "Yet lackest thou one thing: Sell what thou hast and distribute to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in Heaven, and come follow me." This, if it meant anything to His contemporaries, was a blow at individual possessions. This young man was in no way different from other wealthy men, as far as the account shows, except that he was perfectly moral with all his wealth, so that the sacrifice of his wealth was not required for his morals, as commentators say. It was merely because he had wealth that Jesus wanted him to give it up, as if he disapproved of wealth as wealth, which is inconsistent with a community of goods. For Jesus said: "Yet lackest thou one thing—only one—Sell and distribute." A redistribution was wanted; and the "money bags" were required, as on all such occasions, to disgorge. So strongly did Jesus insist on this condition, that the young man, who was so good that Christ "loved him," was not admitted

to membership at all ; but "went away sorrowful because he was very rich." 'How hardly," thereupon says Christ, "shall they which have riches enter into the kingdom of God ;" and then He utters the camel comparison again. Nobody could be admitted into such a community as His "kingdom" was at one time expected to be, except on the equal terms of surrendering his property for the benefit of all. This the rich would not do, and never will do ; so that it is true, as He said, that "it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

The disciples on hearing this utterance naturally asked, "How then can any be saved?" or how can a community succeed at all? when Jesus answered that "things impossible with men are possible with God ;" conveying the impression that a forced community might be adopted, (effected, of course, in the name of God, as all great enterprises whether good or bad are). Then Peter put in his boast, "Lo ! we have left all and followed thee ;" whereupon followed still more strongly Christ's enunciation of the communistic idea: "Verily,

I say unto you, there is no man that hath left houses, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting ;" an utterance containing two things ; one the approval by Christ of those who give up their individual possessions, and the other His promise that they shall, by this sacrifice, get more in the end, and live happier for it. "There is no man that hath left houses, etc., * * that shall not receive manifold more in this *present* time,"—more houses and lands according to the Gospel—the same promise that is made to-day by every communist, namely, that in an organized community all kinds of business and means of happiness will be better conducted than by individual enterprise ; including railroad and steamship lines, manufactures, farming, and every other branch of industry, as well as all kinds of entertainments and amusements, as set forth comprehensively in Cabet's "Icaria," and Bellamy's "Looking Backward."

In fact, nothing has been too much to promise by these idealists in their schemes of perfec-

tibility. The name of Thomas More's ideal community has furnished the strongest word in our language for exaggerated expectations—Utopian—and that of Cabet a similar word in the French language—Icarian. Plato's republic, which was also to be a community, gave similar promises; and the kingdom of Christ, so much like Plato's republic, and still more like Thomas More's Utopia, and most of all like M. Cabet's Icaria, is more prophetic and hopeful than any of them.

Accordingly, Jesus sought by various arguments and promises to induce men to surrender their wealth, or else to think more lightly of it, with the view of arriving at some kind of a community. He particularly distinguished between giving it and lending it. He did not want to borrow of the disciples or of others, but desired to get their money absolutely, and to get them with it. "And if you lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners to receive as much again. But lend hoping for nothing and your reward shall be great," etc.

It has been the uniform experience of com-

munists that persons of wealth desiring to unite with them, have been reluctant to part with their property absolutely. In most cases they have wanted only to invest it as in a stock company, or lend it temporarily to the community as an experiment, to be withdrawn if the scheme should fail. Jesus disapproved of this spirit when He said, "Lend hoping for nothing again." He wanted men to embark unreservedly, and put in their means as a final surrender.

He wanted them, moreover, to give all they had. For there have always been some who have been willing to put in a part, and hold back the rest as a reserve, in case of failure. "He that forsaketh not all," is the substance of His remarks, "cannot be my disciple." The disciples visited terrible infliction on Ananias and Saphira for their sequestration of a part. Christ ostensibly condemned all individual possessions. We have seen how He inclined to loosen the property bonds and contrivances for security, commending the man who forgave his debtors when they could not pay, and the steward who compounded with his master's

debtors by taking a part; how also He condemned the wealthy and exigent, and approved the lenient and benevolent. What the practice of His followers was, or what He taught them to practice, we may infer from the petition in the Lord's Prayer, as reported by Luke, "Forgive us our sins; *for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us.*" In short He advised men to get rid of their property, as the disciples had done, and to get no return for it. "Sell that ye have and give alms." "Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all, he cannot be my disciple." "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself," self-denial (of property, houses, lands, etc.) being a condition precedent—"and let him take up his cross and follow me," the cross being the red flag of that commune, which, though despised in comparison with the Roman "S. P. Q. R.," was yet to rise in honor, as the red flag of France rose to surpass in glory the white lily in the revolution.

When a wronged heir came to Him, mistaking His doctrine of redistribution, and asked, "Speak to my brother that he divide with me,"

Christ said, contemptuously, "Who made me a judge or divider over you? Take heed and beware of covetousness; for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things that he possesseth;" and then He related the parable of the foolish rich man, which is a further exposition of the emptiness of wealth, and of the character of the commune without it. "The ground of a certain rich man," He says, "brought forth plentifully, and he thought within himself, What shall I do? Because I have no room where to bestow my fruits. And he said, I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool! This night thy soul shall be required of thee; then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself," etc.

He then continues His exposition, in answer, I fancy, to the questions of the people as to how they could live without money or other individual means, or without providing for the future

by some kind of accumulations, saying that they shall be provided for like the lily and the ravens by their Heavenly Father in the new kingdom, all in a manner that we shall hereafter explain. But He uncompromisingly keeps to the point, "Sell that ye have, and provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure that fadeth not," etc.; alleging, like the Icarians, that they cannot be genuine communists if they have individual possessions; "for where your treasure is there will your heart be also." And subsequently, when His disciples entered on this common life, which we shall presently describe, they acted out the directions of Jesus in the smallest particulars. For, it is related that, "the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and one mind; neither said any of them that aught of the things which he possessed was his own, but they held all things common;" that is, they had no individual possessions. Thus did Jesus and His apostles, by precept and by example, appear to wage continual war against property and its rights, as the first prerequisite of communism.

The next requisite of a community is that all shall be provided for. Though no one is to pos-

sess anything, all are to have the whole; and none are to lack anything which the whole can furnish. This idea is specially set forth by Jesus. He tells His followers, in view of His expected community, or "kingdom", that they need not be concerned, or even take thought, about their food, drink, or clothing, these being all provided for out of the general fund; but like the birds of the air and the lilies of the field, they may be thoughtless, careless, and doless, except as to the work assigned them in the kingdom. All the wants of men are to be provided for by system, and the individual is to care only to fill his place in that system.

The boasted advantage of the community is that it is to rid the individual of his temporal and physical anxieties, which now render so many unhappy; and to keep him free for the higher intellectual and moral considerations. For, as Christ pertinently asks, "Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?"

And for the future, as well as the present, He gives the same advice; inasmuch as next to the actual wants of the present the apprehended ones of the future give most trouble. "Take,

therefore," He says, "no thought for the morrow, for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself;" that is, the community will provide for the future as well as the present. "Take no thought for your life," His words are, "what ye shall eat, neither for your body, what ye shall put on * * Consider the ravens; for they neither sow nor reap, which neither have storehouse nor barn, and God feedeth them; how much more are ye better than the fowls? Consider the lilies how they grow; they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. If, then, God so clothe the grass, which is to-day in the field, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, how much more will He clothe you, O ye of little faith? And seek ye not what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be of doubtful mind;" as much as to say, these things will be provided in the community, where the people will not feel the lack of them in their individual capacity. "For all these things," He continues, "do the nations of the world seek after," or those who have not entered into a community; "and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these

things," so that they will not be neglected. "But rather seek ye the kingdom of God," He adds, "and all these things shall be added to you." In other words He advises them to enter into the proposed kingdom, and promises that whatever they shall actually need, they shall have from the very fact that they need it. "Ask and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you; for every one that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh it shall be opened."

Nor need it be feared, as is sometimes done, that the authorities, or majority in the community, will not judge properly for the individual, and so refuse him what he may really need, or apportion him an unsuitable work or allotment. "For," says Christ, comparing the Divine Leader and Author of the commune with an individual father, "What man is there of you whom, if his son ask bread, will give him a stone, or if he ask a fish will he give him a serpent? If ye, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father which is in Heaven give good things to them that ask Him." All that is required, He assures

them, is for all to observe the following rule—the *sina qua non* of communism—"All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them;" in other words, let every one do his duty and all will have their rights accorded to them.

And also, in view of the near approach of this kingdom or community, Christ advised His disciples that in the meanwhile, until the actual community should be established, they should carry out their communistic principles as far as this was possible in their individual manner of life.

On sending His apostles out on the work of propagation, He said to them, "Provide neither gold, nor silver nor brass in your purse, nor scrip for your journey, nor two coats, nor staves nor shoes. And in the same house remain eating and drinking such things as they give." In other words, they are to live off the people. If anybody should want an explanation of their conduct, He advises them to give this reason: "Say to the people, the kingdom of God is come nigh to you;" that is, tell them that this conduct is

preparatory to what will be done more fully in the new kingdom.

At all events He assures them that in the new kingdom all things will be provided, and that in the meanwhile it is preparation time; that dwellings, numerous and palatial, food and raiment in abundance and at seasonable times, and all else that is needed will be ever at hand. "In my Father's house" He says, "are many mansions: if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you." There will be, He tells them, "a faithful and wise steward whom his Lord shall make ruler over His household, to give them their portion of meat in due season," and the "Lord Himself when He cometh, shall gird Himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them." No wonder that under such representations, one of the poor, hungry *miserables*, such as it was the object of this community to relieve, cried out, "Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God." "And I appoint unto you," says Christ, "a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me, that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom;" and, as showing the special advan-

tage of this kingdom or community, to them, most of whom are poor and can bring nothing to the common fund, as is the case with nearly all who are ready to enter a community, He says, "I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labor; other men labored and ye are entered into their labors;" so that it is true, in the beginning of the community at least, that "One man soweth and another reapeth."

And, farther on, when the community was fully established and in operation, we are told, "Neither was there any among them that lacked; for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold and laid them at the apostles' feet, and distribution was made to every man according as he had need." The community of the early Christians was carried on in nearly every respect like that of the Icarians in Adams County, Iowa, where the process corresponds closely with what is here described. All the members give up their property of whatever kind, and have a common fund and common officials—stewards, heads of industry, agriculture, etc., from which all are supplied alike with what they

need, according as they may all, in council assembled, determine, or, in minor matters, as their officers may determine for them.

This community of the early Christians is also, in most respects, like that of the Herrnhueters, or Moravians, of Germany, and of the Ebenezers, near Iowa City, Iowa, where the same principles are put in practice, these last two communities being professedly formed on the model of the community of the apostles. It is also, in many respects, like that of the Fouriers, formerly established in New Jersey, and like the various other communities that have been established in modern times. Whatever, in short, may be the varieties of communism—whether Icarian, Fourier, St. Simonian, Blanquist, or co-operative—the people are all provided for, as to their actual wants, from a common fund, which all the property and all the labor of all the members go to supply.

In the apostolic community just as in the present, or recently existing, communities of this country, there was a common treasurer to receive the proceeds and make the expenditures. Judas, we are told, “had the bag to buy those things of which the disciples had need;” and, as in some

modern cases, the treasurer was not the most honest person among them, the temptation of his office being then; as now, too much for his principles. "He was a thief," we are told, "and held the bag."

In the temptation in the wilderness the devil, knowing that Christ purposed to establish a community, and impliedly to raise the means therefor, thought to attack Him on this as His weakest point, and so in his first temptation, tried to induce Him to make bread. "If thou be the Son of God," he said, "command that these stones be made bread," as much as to say, Furnish bread to the people and they will follow you; or, show them that you can do it, and it will have the same effect. For the devil said this in contemplation of Christ's mission. For when Jesus refused to comply, he offered to give Him the kingdoms of the world by another process, and for another service, namely, if He would bow down to him, as explained before.

That Christ actually did furnish bread to the people, is evident from several incidents of the Gospels. He fed five thousand at once, and at another time an indefinitely large number. The

writers say He did it by miracle; but those who doubt the miraculous part of the account may yet believe that He furnished them food; which if He did, and did not do by miracle, He could have done only out of contributions made to a common fund; for He, Himself, had nothing. That He was accustomed to provide His followers with food, through their co-contribution, or otherwise, we further learn from the fact that, as the Gospel represents, many people followed Him merely for the loaves and fishes; that is for their support, when they had, perhaps, no sympathy with the principles underlying His community; just as many now enter the socialistic communities for selfish ends.

Another idea of the community is that the supply just spoken of shall be strictly according to the wants of the individual, just as the contributions made shall be according to the ability of the respective parties, or, as expressed in the formula of the Icarians, "From each according to his ability; to each according to his wants."

That is, there is to be a mutuality of duty and privilege; not a living by the idle off the industrious, nor an indulgence by anybody in useless

and ruinous luxuries. Ask, seek, knock, says Christ, and you will get what is wanted; not a stone when you need bread, nor a serpent when you need fish, nor in any respect one thing when you need another. "Your Heavenly Father knoweth how to give good gifts to them that ask Him." "Therefore," He says, in contemplation of this mutual duty, "all things that ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." In other words, ask and require of others only those things that you need, and would grant to them, and likewise, conversely, grant to them what you would like to have yourselves.

This strict distribution according to the wants of the individual, and not according to his earnings, or his deserts, is taught in the parable of the laborers in the vineyard. The master, whom He likens to the head, or executive officer of the community, went out at the third, sixth, ninth, and eleventh hour respectively, and each time sent laborers into his vineyard, and yet, though some worked nine, and others six, and others three, and others only one hour, he gave to all alike, showing that their equality is to be respected notwithstanding their difference of

service. He taught simply that every man has a right to what he needs, and can of right claim no more. He has a right to this wherever he can get it, and against whoever may keep it from him; and whoever has more than this has it by unlawful appropriation. "*La propriete c'est le vol.*"

His disciples, on going through the fields, plucked the ears and ate, no matter to whom the corn belonged, proceeding on the principle, apparently, that the world owes them a living, and that if it does not give it to them they may take it. And when the people found fault with this, He justified it, and even approved the extreme example of David, who, when hungry, ate the shew bread of the temple, which it was not only not lawful, but sacrilege to eat; teaching the people that both property and sanctity must give way before human want.

Likewise, when He was once coming near Bethpage, He sent His disciples before Him to the village with instructions to take anybody's jack-ass that they should find, and if questioned as to the right or propriety of so doing, to simply say that "the Master hath need of him."

Having overturned the maxim that force makes right, Christ now establishes the better maxim, that want makes right, in all of which however, He preserves the right and the duty as mutual. "For," He says, as His universal rule, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them;" so that while you can demand and take what you need, you must give up what you do not need, to others who do need it. "He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none ; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise."

We must, He says, be like God in this respect, "who sendeth His rain upon the just and the unjust ;" that is, on every one who needs it, and not on those only who have deserved it. Need being set in contradistinction to merit, God favors the needy rather than the good. "God is no respecter of persons," and we should not be. His grace, or favor, is *free* ; and His impartations are to be understood as pure gifts, and in no respect deserved by us. Free and unmerited rewards and goods are to be the order of the new kingdom ; where the needy, the hungry, the thirsty, the naked may come ; and

where we, unless we in turn minister to these, cannot fulfill the requirements of God's kingdom.

We have this lesson beautifully taught in the parable of the lost sheep, the lost coin and the lost son. When a sheep is lost from the flock more attention is bestowed upon it by the shepherd, until it is restored, than upon the ninety and nine which went not astray ; because these last do not need the attention. When a piece of money is lost, it is hunted, and, when found, is rejoiced over more than all the rest of the pile that did not require such solicitude. And when the prodigal son, who had already got and spent all that was his own, (and that too in riotous living and among harlots,) was in want, he was received back and provided for as if he had not forfeited his claim to his father's remaining estate.

Wherever there is a want, there is a supply ; so that when, on the one hand, you feel that want, you may demand the supply; and when, on the other, you see it in another, you should furnish the supply. No matter how the want be deserved, or the supply be earned, whoever

has either has the right or the duty of the satisfaction. The sullen brother of the prodigal, who objected because the undeserving spendthrift is resupplied as to his wants, is reproved by the father with the suggestion, "All I have is thine;" as indeed is all the property of a family or community the possession of every member of it.

Strict desert must never be made the measure of supplying wants, although it should be made the lowest limit aspired to in bestowing labor. Aim always to do your duty at least ; but do not restrict your awards within the measure of the faithfulness of others. In the community, as we have seen, it often occurs, and necessarily so, that "one soweth and another reapeth ;" many a one "reaping where he has not sown and gathering where he has not strewed." Sow where you can; reap where you must. Induce others also to sow all they can ; but never restrain them from reaping what they need. The individual cannot in a community get his own results *pro tanto*. As each labors for all, his results are lost in the whole ; and as all labor for each, each gets the advantage, not of his individual production only, but of the co-

operation of all. Therefore, says Christ, "I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labor; other men labored and ye are entered into their labors."

And, as we have already explained, when the community was subsequently attempted, and got in practical operation, this principle was still kept steadily in view. For, as we have seen, "All that believed were together, and had all things common, and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men as every man had need. Neither was there any among them that lacked; for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the price of the things that were sold, and laid them at the apostles' feet; and distribution was made to every man according as he had need."

And then the writer enumerates some of the incidents of the working of this enterprise; how they came, one after another to give up their goods and unite with the community; some acting in good faith and others trying to deceive, or keep back part of their property; and the disapproval of this latter conduct by the communistic managers who insisted on conformity to their prin-

ciple throughout, and the summary punishment of the delinquents. "And Joses * * having land sold it, and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet. But a certain man, named Ananias, with Saphira his wife, sold a possession, and kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles' feet. But Peter said, 'Why has Satan, (the prince, as he explains, of the powers of this world,) filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the land. While it remained was it not thine own? And after it was sold was it not in thine own power? Why hast thou conceived this thing in thine own heart? Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.'

And then follows the sudden death and sequestration of Ananias for this offence. Then his wife came in, and Peter said unto her, 'Tell me whether ye sold the land for so much,' and she said, 'Yea, for so much.' Then Peter said unto her, 'How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the spirit of the Lord,' etc; when her death and removal likewise follow by the same hands as her husband's. "And great fear," we

are told, "came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things. * * And of the rest durst no man join himself unto them; but the *people* magnified them, and believers were the more added, * * multitudes both of men and women. * * And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and one soul; neither said any of them that aught of the things which he possessed was his own, but they had all things common."

We learn, too, from the same account, that the apostles carried this work beyond the local community actually established at Jerusalem, and applied the principle to dealings with their brethren in other parts of the world; that is, there was a partial application of the communistic principle to localities where the community was not yet established, though doubtless in contemplation of the complete establishment of the community everywhere. It is related that "the disciples, every one *according to his ability*, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwell in Judea; which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul;" showing, at least, that the disciples

were united in their money interests, as well as in their political and religious faith.

We find, subsequently, when it was thought that the principle was not faithfully carried out, that a trouble arose, as there always will among communists who in their ultra radicalness and independent individuality of thought can never largely or long agree, but will have each his irreconcilable views and system to tenaciously maintain. Some of the Greek widows, it seems, complained because of partiality shown, so that the work had to be further subdivided, as is always necessary with an increase of dimensions and complications in a community. Elders were accordingly appointed and installed to look more particularly after such matters; for, the apostles said, "It is not meet that we should leave the Word of God and serve tables." In fact the Acts of the Apostles shows that about all the difficulties, and measures to meet the difficulties, took place, that ordinarily do in a modern socialistic community; although all things as far as possible were regulated on the principle above stated.

The next idea of a community is so to organ-

ize the people therein, that the requisite equality of all shall be secured, and at the same time that all the people shall work at some useful occupation, according to their capacity and qualifications, all serving and all getting served, without any menial degradation on the part of any.

In all the communities hitherto attempted, the work has, with this view, been so apportioned that each could pursue such occupation as suited him; one agriculture, another gardening, another medicine; some being chosen to official positions for a limited term, such as president, treasurer or head of a department, and yet all be eligible to all places as the majority should appoint, without any rank, title or exclusive privilege for any, and without compelling, more than is necessary, any one to pursue an occupation for which he has no liking, but dividing up the undesirable work among all equally.

We say something like this has always been attempted, and this was attempted in the community of the early Christians. The general principle is clearly set forth in the utterances of Jesus already quoted; where, when there was a

strife among them which should be the greatest in this new kingdom, He said: "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and they that exercise authority over them are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so, but he that is greatest among you let him be as the younger, and he that is chief as he that doth serve. For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat or he that serveth? Is not he that sitteth at meat? But I—the principal, the Cabet, the Pythagoras, the Zinzendorf—am among you as one that serveth." And elsewhere He says, "He that would be greatest among you let him be the servant of all."

Though their tasks and positions may be different, and those of some be more desirable than those of others, He said to them, "Ye are all brethren." "One soweth and another reapeth;" one does one work, and another another, but still they are all children of the same social family; sons, not servants; members of the same household; heirs and joint heirs with Christ to the whole kingdom, rulers, kings, priests—anything whatever—with promises of crowns and thrones and starred diadems, but still workers,

ministers, laborers in His vineyard, stewards of His household, and all "workmen that need not be ashamed."

And though to one he gave ten talents, and to another five, and to another two and to another one, and although consequently one did ten times, and another five times, and another two times as much work, according to their respective capacities, physical and intellectual, yet all are to have the same social position and rights. If some are given more responsible work than others to do, it is only because they are deemed more capable of doing it; each one working according to his ability, and receiving according to his wants, in which the great worker may be the little wanter, and in which all reap where they bestowed no labor; the great and the strong thus taking care of the weak, rather than making the weak take care of them, as in the individual system.

Responsible and able men are to be put in the chief places, but only as servants and stewards for the benefit of the rest. "Who, then," says Christ, "is that faithful and wise steward whom his lord shall make ruler over his household to

give them their portion of meat in due season? Blessed is that servant whom his lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing. Of a truth I say unto you he will make him ruler over all that he hath. * * For unto whomsoever much is given much will be required, and to whom men have committed much they will ask more."

And when they have done all, He says, they deserve no special gratitude, and will get no special reward, for they have only done their duty, it being their duty from the very fact that they could do it, or, as He elsewhere puts it: "Doth he"—the master—"thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I trow not. So likewise ye, when ye have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants; we have done that which was our duty to do."

The great will therefore be the servants of the least; and the chief of all, the Master Himself, "will gird Himself, and make them sit down to meat and will come forth and serve them."

We have already quoted Christ's characterization of the inequality practiced in the outside world, which He places in contrast with the equal-

ity that is to be practiced in His kingdom. "But which of you," He asks, referring to the manner of life outside of the community, "having a servant plowing or feeding cattle, will say unto him, by and by, when he is come from the field, Go and sit down to meat; and will not rather say unto him, Make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself and serve me till I have eaten and drunken, and afterwards thou shalt eat and drink?" But in the new kingdom, on the other hand, there is to be no such priority. Though the work of both classes is to be done, it will be done by all without any distinction between the high and the low. Instead of the previous disparity between the server and the served, "the Master Himself," He says, "will gird Himself and make them sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them." In other words, according to Christ, the old method will be reversed. The servants will be the served, and the Master will be their waiter.

St. James, in speaking of this equality, says, touching the new state of things, "My brethren, have not the faith * * * with respect of persons. For if there come unto your assem-

bly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment, and ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothes, and say unto him, Sit down there in a good place, and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or, Sit here under my foot-stool, are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts?" And He further adds, condemning the former ascendancy of the rich, which is now to be changed. "Hearken, my beloved brethren. Hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He hath promised to them that love Him? But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you and draw you before the judgment seats? Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by which ye are called? If ye fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, ye do well. But if ye have respect to persons ye commit sin and are convinced of the law as transgressors."

2. DUTIES AND RESTRAINTS—Such are, in general, the principles of communism, and such were the utterances and acts of Christ and His

followers calculated to inculcate these principles and render them intelligible in their fullness of meaning. It was not enough, however, to adopt such principles and cause them to be adopted by His followers. It was necessary to translate them into fact, actualizing the idea in the *de facto* community. Christ, accordingly, gave practical advice and direction for work, as well as theories and promises for belief. He encouraged diligence, responsibility, prudence and whatever else was required in the task of establishing or successfully carrying out these ideals. After inculcating, therefore, the doctrines mentioned and urging their acceptance in all their implications, He distinguished between the theory and the service to be rendered, a difference which was subsequently transformed into that of the theological distinction between faith and works.

First, then, He calls on His followers, like Baboeuf and Cabet, to work and not profess only; to show their love for the community by laboring for it and in it and not merely by talking about it. "Not every one," He says, "that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven, but he that doeth the will

of my Father which is in Heaven." It was the tendency of communists, then as now, to loudly profess and admire the community, but not to be willing to work hard to bring it about or to make it successful when in it. "If any man," says Christ, "will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross," showing his faith by his works, and his sincerity by his fruits.

He wants no drones in His cause or in His community; none who seek a subsistence while shirking their duty—the common bane of modern communities. He cursed the barren fig tree as a type of the fate of all such parasites, who enter merely for the loaves and fishes, and are a dead weight on the industrious. "Every branch that bringeth not forth good fruit He taketh away." The unprofitable servant He orders to be cast into outer darkness.

He distinguishes between the hearers and the doers of the Word. They that only hear and accept His sayings and system are compared in their efforts to construct a community, to a foolish man who built his house upon the sand. "And the rain descended and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house,

and it fell; and great was the fall of it." But those who both accept and carry out His principles, are compared to a wise man who built his house upon a rock. "And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house, and it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock."

He likewise compares those who receive His Word, or system, to seed sown; those who accept it in time of peace and ease, and give it up in trouble and work, to seed that falls among thorns, which the thorns soon choke; and those that accept it without thought, and carry it no further than the mere acceptance, to seed that falls where there is no depth of earth, and so springs up, or is adopted, merely because there is no depth of earth (as most communists now accept their system, who adopt it simply because it requires nothing but a little thought to do so,) but wither away when the heat and scorching sun of labor and trial come.

Christ wants all to work, because on work depends the mutual support of all, and the success of the community. He recalls His disciples constantly to the fundamental principle of the

community, that one soweth and another reapeth; and reminds them that they themselves have been the recipients of the work of others. "I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labor; other men labored, and ye are entered into their labors. Ye ought, therefore, to work and not to faint." "Work," He again says, "while it is called day; for the night cometh when no man can work;" in other words, work while you can, and let others do so; for the time will come to all when, in sickness or old age, they must be maintained as a burden by the work of others. Earn therefore your place, and "let every man bear his own burden," and so, on the whole, "bear ye one another's burdens."

As another inducement to diligence a reward is held out to be given according to the work done. This is the promise always made to revolutionists, whether in the interest of a kingdom, a republic, or a community. The pretender promises titles, rank, ministerial offices, generalships, spoils, and other preferments, according to the bravery and successful work of his followers. So we are informed by Christ that "the

Son of Man shall come and reward every one according to his works."

In a community where all ranks and distinctions are to be abolished, the rewards offered are, of course, to be only such as are possible under such circumstances, namely, the honorable and responsible positions in the administration of the community—to rule over ten cities, or five cities, or two cities, according to the aspirant's ability, such ability (as in St. Simon's community) to be estimated according to his works. For in all communities it is proposed, while keeping all persons equal, to yet reward merit. Cabet, in his Icarian system, provided prizes for discoveries, inventions, and other great services; while the rest insist that their fellow citizens will naturally reward all worthy persons by elevation to the highest offices and most desirable places; so that men of talent and attainments will fill the presidency, the secretaryship, and the place of teacher, while the less ambitious and less serviceable will occupy the common laborer's place. "For unto every one that hath, to him shall be given and he shall have more abundantly, and from him that hath not shall be taken away even

that he hath." And "With what measure ye mete it shall be meted to you again."

Christ illustrates His idea on this subject by the parable of "a certain nobleman who went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom;" or, as it is elsewhere related, "The kingdom of Heaven is as a man traveling into a far country who called his own servants and delivered unto them his goods. And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to every man according to his several ability, saying, Occupy till I come. * * And it came to pass that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called to him, * * when he that had received five talents came and brought five other talents, and he that had received two talents came and brought two other talents," and each received the approbation of his lord: "Well done good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy lord." And so one was made ruler over ten cities, and the other over five cities, according to their respective ability and work. And

the man who did not improve his talent, lost it, and lost also his future opportunity, his talent passing to him that had ten talents. And when he justified himself on the ground that in the community one takes up where he laid not down, and reaps where he did not sow, the answer is, "Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strewed;" and an order is given to "cast the unprofitable servant out," to take his chances in individualism.

Christ further enforces the idea that one in position, as well as one out of it, if he does well, shall be promoted and go up higher, and if he does badly, shall be put down; thus "setting up one and putting down another." "Who then," He asks, in speaking on this subject, "is that faithful and wise servant whom his lord hath made ruler over his household to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant whom his lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing. Verily, I say unto you, he shall make him ruler over all his goods." And, in contrast with this, He says, "But, and if that evil servant
* * shall begin to smite his fellow-servants,

and to eat and drink with the drunken, the lord of that servant shall come * * and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites."

And thus, in general, Christ, after He had sufficiently aroused His people, and instructed them on the necessity and advantages of a community, called their attention to its practical work. He reminded them in particular of the fact that the work of destruction and radicalism was but temporary, and would soon be over, and that the work of founding and building up the new system would principally engage their attention. He came, He said, not to destroy but to fulfill the law, and intended, in the end, to "restore all things."

He therefore wanted in His followers not only braves and warriors, but workmen and laborers, men not only to fight and propagate, but to toil and produce; somebody to sweat as well as to bleed. He made a special call for laborers in His vineyard, men for the plentiful harvest which was ripe for the sickle. The social temple thrown down was to be rebuilt, the earth which was to pass away was to be followed by a new one, the titled and the dignitaries—the aristoc-

racy and the officers—which were to disappear, were to be replaced by an equally diligent company of new and faithful men in every department of life.

Thus, therefore, in various ways, was the idea of communism and its duties developed by Christ and His followers, until every important phase of the subject was illustrated and enforced.

Thus far, however, all was positive. The projected community was, as yet, only theoretical, and while it remained unrealized the expectations were great, the schemes unlimited, and the principles and measures extreme. As is always the case with the positive part of such a work—with the instilling of the idea and the propagation—much is said and done that runs into the ridiculous and impractical. The people being called to a radical and revolutionary work, and encouraged by extravagant promises, are necessarily carried to extremes.

Accordingly the next work of Christ and of the leaders of this communism, is to recall the people to the practical—to moderate their wishes and expectations, and to restrain themselves within the bounds of common prudence and com-

mon sense. Communism has always gone first to extremes in projecting the unabridged ideal and desire, and then been restrained within the possible in order to get itself into practical operation. Accordingly we find a gradually developed series of checks to radicalism and a subsequent letting down of the high ideal to a more practical level, with the consequent disappointment of the more radical and sanguine.

First, after having given the impression, whether intentional or not, that there would be no marriage in the new community or kingdom, but that the people would live in a sort of concubinage, or free love, Christ indicates that the existing social relations will not be disturbed, and in particular that marriage will be kept intact. For He had at first told His hearers that in the new kingdom the people would neither marry nor be given in marriage, which was construed to point to a state like that of Plato's community of women, or like the similar system proposed by St. Simon and some other modern socialists, which has been put in actual operation in the Oneida community and, to a small extent, among certain spiritualists. The women, it was thought,

were all to belong to all men, which would be the solution of the sex problem in Christ's community.

For, as every system of socialism has had to deal with this subject, that of Christ could not escape its consideration. As therefore Plato proposed a community of women, Mohammed a limited plurality of wives, the Essenes and modern Shakers an abolition of marriage and of all substitutes for it, the French communists their various systems of libertinism, and the Mormons their unlimited extension of the marriage relation, Christ appeared to fall in with the general enthusiasm on the subject, and to adopt something like Platonic love.

I say He at first appeared to do so. His relations with the family were certainly not of the ordinary kind. He acknowledged no paternal ancestors or authority. He was deemed by many a bastard, "one born out of due time," a Melchizedek "without father." He did not call His mother mother, or recognize His brothers and sisters as having the usual family claims upon Him, but He said instead, "Whosoever doeth the will of my Father which is in Heaven, the same is my mother, my sister and my brother;" He called Himself the

Son of Man, not of any particular man, but of man in general. As He knew no lines of nations or tribes, He appeared to know none of family. He never spoke of family or home affections, or mentioned any of His relatives; He never gave commands to love parents, children, brothers or sisters; but, on the other hand, He says, "If any man come to me and hate not his father, mother, wife, and children and brothers and sisters, he cannot be my disciple." He did not Himself appear to have any special tenderness for His parents, or to care for their concern about Him; but told them that they ought to know that He must be about His Father's business. Though He often spoke of His father, He never meant by that term Joseph, but one who was the father of all the race. He appeared to teach His disciples to turn away from their earthly parents, as from kings, and to say "Our Father *which art in Heaven.*" And in speaking to others He often mentioned their Heavenly Father, but never their earthly fathers. He had, in short, no antecedents and no history that showed Him specially in sympathy with the marriage system; and hence He not unnaturally

was taken to be in favor of a new social order in this respect.

But though Jesus had apparently held out this idea of the abolition of marriage, and of existing institutions in general, it was more apparent than real, and He subsequently returned to a more conservative position, resolving, like many of the later and more moderate communists—such as Cabet and Louis Blanc—to preserve the marriage relation. In restraint of their radicalism, He accordingly tells His followers that in the new kingdom the old state will, in this respect, be maintained; that when that time and that state come, the people will be eating, and drinking, and marrying, and giving in marriage, as in Noah's time; that women will be at their work in the house and on the house-top, and that they will not be disturbed; that they will be grinding at the mill and performing other suitable duties, like the men, and not be called on to leave them.

And not only so, but He would make the bonds of matrimony even tighter. He did not approve of the easy divorce laws of the Romans, or even of the more stringent ones of the Jews. Stick to your wife, He said, and, if you leave her,

keep away from other women as your punishment. He had always been extreme in requiring chastity, giving no countenance to adultery, fornication or even impure thoughts; whether from a Shaker opposition to all associations with women, or from a desire to keep one to one. But now He clearly showed Himself to be most conservative on the marriage relation. His reproof of the woman of Samaria who had had seven husbands is evidence of this, as He did not regard her present husband as any husband at all. This monogamic opinion of Christ was, no doubt, His permanent conviction, as it was expressed early and late in His ministry; and the fact of an apparent vacillation or inconsistency on the subject, was due rather to the variety of views among communists, and to the speculations of His followers in particular, than to any lack of conviction or decisive preference on His part.

For many of these issues and aims of Christ are due rather to the pressure of the subject in which He embarked, than to His own individual thoughts. He was, in the course of His work, called on to consider many subjects which always accompany such enterprises in which he had no

special interest, but which, since He could not avoid them, He had to dispose of. They may, nevertheless, be carefully separated from His main purpose and principles. Christ was on all subjects prudent and moderate. If the traditions of His cause, and the impetuosity of His disciples carried His work into uncongenial connections and apparent contradictions, He always brought it back in time, and corrected, as far as was possible, the false impressions.

Another subject on which Jesus found it necessary to give His followers conservative advice, was their internal divisions. Here, as in all socialistic and communistic movements, the apostles and Christians became too independent and individualistic for the realization of their own schemes. Communists have never been practical, and therefore the proposed communities have never succeeded. Nearly everybody has wanted to have his own way, even to the minutest particulars, and most would prefer to fail in all rather than yield a part. There has generally been, among a hundred communists, a hundred systems of communism—as many ideals as there have been idealists. Communism being a theory drawn

from the imagination, and not from experience—a protest against existing states and institutions in favor of untried ones—it could not be otherwise than tentative, and as self-conflicting as the different thoughts of which it is the product.

The socialists have always been the irreconcilables in the state, the opposition in politics, and the “outs” in government. They have learned how to fight, but not to do much else; to tear down, but not to build up; to overturn (whether systems, dynasties or institutions,) but not to establish anything instead. An example of this we have in the burning of churches, palaces and cities in the French revolution, and in the general destruction wrought by the late Commune of Paris. As soon as one had a system, even of communism, the others, seeing its defects, began to fight it and pull it down. Trained by long practice to hunting out and magnifying the defects of the old systems, they could not be expected to overlook or excuse those (often of a like kind) that attached to their own ideal as soon as brought out into clearness by attempts at actual construction.

Accordingly, among the early Christians, as

among all subsequent and preceding communists, there was a severer and more constant conflict between themselves than against their enemies. The early Christians were divided into many sects and parties, and their divisions have always been found irreconcilable. They disputed sometimes on doctrines and sometimes on policies. Their principal differences regarded the *Church* or *Community*, just as now there is a conflict among Christians over "the Church," although they give a different meaning to the word "Church."

For the early church or "communion of saints"—"the ekklessia" or organization of the faithful—was, at first, nothing but a socialistic organization—a *society* or *community* of believers—the "household of faith," "the congregation" or "general assembly"—in short, a democratic gathering of the whole. We have already seen that they had at first their goods in common, and various other features of an organized socialistic and political body.

This organization or union of Christians, or church, has been, I say, a fruitful source of conflict, just as all schemes for the realization of a

community have been. Every few years, and often many times in the same year, parties became dissatisfied and broke off, forming in each case an organization or church more to their liking, with a new theory and new policy of a church, or, in theological parlance, with a new creed and new polity. And the impulse, I may add, which the spirit of communism gave to the early Christians, has continued till now, even when the old causes for it no longer exist; for among modern Christians there are as many sects as among modern socialists; and most of the differences, as I have said, have arisen on the question of the *Church*—what it is, what is its form of organization, its terms of membership, its officers, its procedures, etc.; one church accusing, excluding and condemning the others, and fighting more against other branches than against the common enemy, or non-Christian world. For churchmen have always fought more, and done more harm to, each other, than to the world; always fighting among themselves, and, until lately, persecuting and even destroying one another.

Seeing this disposition manifesting itself early

Socialism of Christ—10

in the Christian community, Jesus directed His conservative wisdom against it. He tried to make His followers live together in peace notwithstanding their differences; to harmonize their actions by not insisting unduly on their individual peculiarities; to cultivate brotherly love and forbearance, instead of uncompromising individualism.

This is one of the requisites of positive and constructive work, as against radical demolition. "Every kingdom," He says, "divided against itself is brought to destruction, and a house divided against itself falleth." Many, He predicts, will be offended; and, as if foreseeing the difficulties of His own system, He says, "Ye shall all be offended because of me." His experience was to be like that of M. Cabet, against whom his followers revolted immediately after establishing his community at Nauvoo; and like that of Robespierre, Danton, Enfantin and Baboeuf, who all received bad treatment from their followers on commencing their constructive work. "Republics," says an adage, "are ungrateful;" and certainly every communistic leader

has met an inglorious defeat, if nothing worse, at the hands of his followers.

Paul, who followed Christ, and did the constructive work of Christianity, had to give constant advice on this subject, urging the early Christians to forbearance and charity, asking them to prefer one another and be reconciled, and especially to submit their differences to the whole. Now he reproved Peter, now Alexander the coppersmith, now some local church disturber, and now the community in general. The people, he thought, were too much broken up into parties, and followed too readily favorite leaders and systems. One, he complained, was for Paul, another for Apollos, and another for Cephas; one for a Jewish and another for a Gentile community; one set for holding on to their money, and another in dispute over general funds for widows; so that much of his work was aimed at getting the people to drop their individual preferences and follow obediently the church, or majority of the brethren.

Another object of conservative advice much needed by the communists, was in restraint of violence. It has never been difficult to make

the communists revolutionary enough, or to dispose them to do the work of destruction; but it has always been difficult to get them to stop when they have done enough, and to observe moderation in their course of ruin. The burning of cities, palaces and religious buildings, the destruction of people and of private property—iconoclasm, regicide and similar devastation—has been the work which has always marked their reign of terror. The consciousness of their former wrongs, their inexperience in practical management, their untutored and unrefined character as laboring men and poor miscreants, naturally led them to this.

Christ, accordingly, like every other leader of such bodies, was compelled to recall them frequently to proper bounds in their wrath. I have already cited several examples of their violence or contemplated violence ; examples not unlike those of the recent French Commune. We have no instance of Christ's approval of this, although recognizing and prophesying concerning it as an unavoidable accompaniment of His work. But we have many instances of His reproving and restraining it. When the apostles James and

John, for example, asked that He destroy certain Samaritans who would not receive them favorably, He answered, "Ye know not what spirit ye are of. The Son of Man is come not to destroy men's lives, but to save them." So also He commanded Peter, when he wanted to fight, to put up his sword, saying, "They that take the sword shall perish with the sword." He told the soldiers to "do violence to no man." He so restrained the wonted violence of the communists, in short, that His followers, thinking He was not in sympathy with their cause as a leader, asked whether He was the anointed or not.

And thus in various ways, not only in inciting the people to their duty as socialists, but also in putting on them the necessary restraints of practical wisdom, did Jesus show Himself the great popular leader, His cause the social cause, and His followers the ordinary socialistic elements.

CHAPTER VI

MONARCHICAL REACTION

We come next to the monarchical element in the early Christian cause. For, in every great political movement, whether in the interest of the people or of the rulers, and whether in that of the poor or of the rich, there is a monarchical faction or tendency. A revolution, though in general a socialistic, democratic or republican one, is always somewhat affected by the very principles or prejudices which it antagonizes. This is due partly to the fact that men are hardly ever pure examples of either one or the other party into which the people are divided on such occasions; so that no matter which side of a question they espouse, they still have lingering relics of sympathy for the other side; partly to

the fact that in a contest of opinions they are somewhat convinced or modified by the arguments and general force of their opponents; partly to the fact that some get by force of circumstances on the side on which, constitutionally or by education, they do not belong, and still again partly to the fact that they espouse a cause not fully, but only in general, going but part of the length of their partisans.

I say that there is, accordingly, in every popular movement a monarchical element. Some of the people believe like the Orleanists, that their revolutionary interests will best be promoted under a king and nobility; others have no political sentiments whatever, and conceive of nothing but the old regime, others are only moderately radical, and look for reform without revolution, others are ambitious and treacherous and will espouse any cause that promises to save their selfish interests, and others again change in the very course of the contest itself, whether from ill success, or despair of their ideal.

We thus find in the French Revolution—an event pregnant with all the phases of the popular revolutionary character—that there were

monarchists not only among the opponents of the revolutionists, but among the revolutionists themselves, so that their forces were divided, and part of the conflict was waged against itself. Persons entrusted with power in the interest of the people used it for themselves; there grew up an aristocracy of the revolutionary elements; the leaders made themselves *quasi* princes. Robespierre became dictator, Napoleon I, the republican leader, turned against his cause and made himself emperor, as Cromwell did in the English Revolution, and as Kossuth proposed to do in that of Hungary. The same was done in the revolution of 1830, when Louis Philippe ascended the throne, and in that of 1848 when the republican president installed himself in imperial power as Napoleon III.

So it was in the early Christian movement. Although the cause of Christ was that of the people, in the interest of the people, and in favor of popular sovereignty, there was yet a conservative element observable from the beginning, and a retrograde movement developed with the progress of the cause. Some who espoused the Christian interest gave only moderate adherence

to Christ's doctrines, others, though the movement was social and republican, were sincerely monarchical, and others still experienced a change of opinion and policy with the progress of the cause, as I have just explained.

Jesus Himself was at first strongly democratic and republican, and this seemed to be His sincere conviction throughout. But subsequently, with the adulation of His followers and His complete mastery over them, He appeared to conceive ambitious projects, or at least to listen to others who did so for Him. From having been the champion and leader of the people He came to be their master and ruler. To the astonishment of the people He gradually commenced to speak "as one having authority," and was at last led, it was supposed, to contemplate a *coup d'etat*, or the making of Himself a king.

The throne of David had long been vacant, the Jews with the memory of their ancient greatness, were discontented under their Roman subjection; He could with a little straining prove Himself to be in the line of the kings of Israel, in short, from the complete ascendancy He had gained over the people, the way seemed clear to



make Himself a king, and not only a king, but a deliverer of the people; the one foretold in the legends of His race, "the Christ," "the Anointed," "the son of David," "the offspring of Jehovah."

I say this idea seems to have been gradually developed in the mind of Christ as it was urged upon Him by His followers. For still more strongly than in Christ, do we see this idea growing in the minds of the people, until at last they conceive of Him as a king, or royal pretender. Finally, He came out Himself openly as a claimant for royal honors, pretending to be the King of the Jews and the successor of David, and in this capacity, like Henri of Bourbon in France, He threw around Him His insignia of authority, spoke of His kingdom, His laws, His subjects and His future universal empire, of which there should be no end.

I say it came to this at last. We find, however, as already intimated, that the seeds of this were in His cause from the first; and that all through His career they may be traced; sometimes germinating and bearing promise, and sometimes only coming feebly forth to be repulsed by the general republican sympathy of

the movement. Often the monarchical cause gained strength by a misinterpretation of the words of Jesus, and often by an incorrect report of His utterances. But whatever the cause, the monarchical element, or the thought that was fixed on Christ as a monarch, was a power in the early Christian movement. I shall, therefore, next trace the main features of this element.

I observe, then, in the first place, that the followers of Jesus were taught to expect a kingdom, in which He would be the king. He speaks of it as "my kingdom," "the kingdom which my Father will give," "the kingdom of God," "the kingdom of Israel," "the kingdom restored," and "the everlasting kingdom." All the prophecies of the old testament concerning a kingdom for the Jews He interprets, or His followers for Him, as applying to this new kingdom, and all the Jewish expectations of a kingdom were taken advantage of to persuade the people that the popular expectations were fulfilled in Him.

For it is well known that a *kingdom* was expected; whether actually anticipated before the coming of Christ, or only an afterthought antedated from the actual kingdom then advocated.

A kingdom was expected at the time and everything that Christ did was interpreted in a sense compatible therewith. Impatiently the disciples asked: "Wilt thou again restore the kingdom," or bring about a monarchy? "Wilt thou now restore unto us the kingdom of Israel?" He taught His disciples, as part of their universal prayer, to ask for this kingdom. "Thy kingdom come;" and for this kingdom they understood that they were to work. He taught them also to say; "For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory;" in other words, to acknowledge in Him all royal prerogative. And to this prayer He taught them to say, as already observed, Amen—so let it be—as an ejaculation in favor of royalty.

For these prayers and these expectations, whatever significance they may have had in the mind of Christ, or may have to Christians now, meant to the people, or at least to the monarchists among them, a prayer for, and expectation of, an ordinary kingdom; a kingdom like that of England or Russia, and not some ethereal or indefinite thing in another world, of which in their ignorance they could then have no conception.

There was a kingdom demanded, if not by Christ, at least by some of His followers; demanded, no doubt, partly in opposition to the provincial or ducal government of the country under Rome, and partly as a reaction against the republican and revolutionary sentiment which aimed to sweep away the old political order.

Accordingly, we find Christ, like all pretenders, claiming the necessary attendants and insignia of royalty. First of all He claimed for Himself a royal birth; or rather, His disciples claimed it for Him. For no sooner is it determined to achieve for Him a crown, than He is set forth as the legitimate heir of David, the head of the house of Israel and of Judah, entitled by descent to rule that country and people. In other words He claimed by regular succession and divine right, like the Count de Chamborde of France, and like every thorough legitimist of modern Europe.

As, therefore, the soldier Cæsar, who, when he once reached the throne, or felt he was destined to rule, traced back his lineage to Acneas the King of Troy; and as the Corsican peasant Napoleon, when he came to be emperor, did,

for his better security, look beyond his humble parentage, and trace his line to an ancient Gallic king, so Jesus, a carpenter's and peasant's boy, when He was seen to be destined for the throne, had hunted up for Him a royal parentage.

We, accordingly, find the evangelists tracing back His line to David and the kings of the Old Testament. And, to make assurances doubly sure, one evangelist traces back His maternal and the other His legal descent, so that He shall be seen to have both the blood and the inheritance of David. Matthew, therefore, for the Jews, gives His paternal line and title, and Luke for the Gentiles His natural one. For, having somewhat overshot their mark in claiming for Him a divine birth, His followers, (being estopped from claiming a hereditary title on the father's side, and compelled to content themselves with one on the mother's side only), took advantage of Joseph's marriage with His mother to allege a title by adoption.

Paul in a speech to a body of Jews at Antioch, traced, with special reference to Christ's title, the

history of the Jewish people, from the beginning to that time, showing that Jesus was in the regular line of their kings, and the promised Savior, who should be the deliverer and aggrandizer of Israel. After reminding them that their fathers had given the republic a long and fair trial, that for four hundred and fifty years they had had judges; and that they afterwards desired a king, He says, "God gave unto them Saul * * a man of the tribe of Benjamin; * * and when He had removed him, He raised up unto them David to be their king, to whom also He gave testimony and said, I have found David, the Son of Jesse, a man after my own heart, which shall fulfill all my will. Of this man's seed hath God, according to His promise, raised unto Israel a Savior, Jesus."

Christ was, accordingly, called the "Son of David," a "prince of the House of David," "the lion of the tribe of Judah;" and, like the Count de Chamborde and Don Carlos of to-day, He even assumed before His coronation the title of "King of the Jews," and "King of Israel."

We are told that in order that nothing might

be wanting in His birth to insure His legitimacy and entitle Him to the throne, His parents took the precaution to have Him born in the place and manner which were necessary to entitle Him to the throne, whether it be that this precaution was actually taken, or, like the prophecies of His career, was an after story invented as a reflex of the fact, to attest and explain the place of His birth and the validity of His citizenship.

For, it is related that Joseph and Mary went, at taxing time, out of the city of Nazareth, (where He was in danger of being born), into Judea into the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because He was of the house and lineage of David; that is, that they went thither in order that He might be born in His own country, and so be entitled to the throne, which He could not be as an alien; all of which precaution we might add was necessary, or at least some account thereof was deemed necessary in order to explain the place of His birth; because it was generally known that His parents lived at Nazareth, instead of in Judea, so that He might, *prima facie*, be presumed to be a Nazarene.

Again, the monarchical element claimed for

Christ a divine birth, as well as a royal one; and Christ Himself, when He came to see the feasibility of the monarchical projects, appeared to accept the pretension.

This claim of a divine birth was formerly made for all kings and royal pretenders, and if it is not made to-day it is only because it is exchanged for that of a divine right to rule.

As, therefore, Romulus was the son of Mars, and Memnon, the son of Aurora, so Christ was the Son of God. Like Castor and Pollux, who were born of Jupiter and Leda, and like Teucer who was born of Scamander and the nymph Idaeia, so Jesus was born of Jehovah and Mary. The Holy Ghost was His father. Jehovah came under that name to His mother in the shape of a dove or angelic annunciation, as Jupiter came in the shape of a swan, a cloud or a golden rain to his several amantes. Christ was born of a virgin without the destruction of her virginity; and, like the Count de Chamborde, was proclaimed an *enfant du miracle*. It is announced at His birth that "He shall be called the Son of the Highest," and He is named to this day "the Son of God." God is represented as appearing repeat-

edly to testify to His parentage, and to authorize His resulting claim to authority. At His baptism, when His public name and character are supposed to have been first proclaimed to the world, God is represented as saying, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." Not only "my Son" like many sons of earthly kings, illegitimate and unacknowledged, but "my Son in whom I am well pleased," and whom, as He afterwards says, "I delight to honor." At the transfiguration, which was a sort of crowning scene, when a halo of golden light as a royal diadem, encircled His brow, and a supernatural coronation was enacted, God appeared again, testifying both to His divine birth, and the validity of His royal claim: "This is my beloved Son; hear ye Him," or "This is your legitimate King, be satisfied with His title, and obey Him as your Leader."

The people, too, when the royal propagation began, and the masses commenced to accept Him as their future king, recognized His kingship as flowing from His divine birth, or, at least, as connected therewith. For, "Nathaniel said unto Him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou

art the King of Israel;" this being, it seems the common form of recognition by an adherent of the legitimacy of a royal pretender.

And when, on one occasion, He wished to draw the people out to a recognition of His divine birth, (they already believing in His royal birth,) He asked, "What think ye of Christ? Whose son is He?" And when they said, "the son of David," He replied that that was not sufficient, and asked them, "How then, doth David in spirit call Him Lord, saying, 'The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou on my right hand till I make thine enemies thy footstool?' If David then call Him Lord, how is He his son?" The only answer, of course, is that He is the Son of God, and that He possesses whatever dignity and authority that greater title implies.

The attendant circumstances of Christ's birth also proclaimed Him a king. If the regal displays alleged, did actually accompany His birth, even by a false report, they prove that He was then considered a destined king; if they did not, but were invented afterwards as probable circumstances of a preceding event, they prove at least, that when He made His pretensions to royalty,

His followers were anxious to get up for Him a fitting birth. He is represented as being announced with proclamations and rejoicings, and as being testified to by such omens as commonly attend the birth of a prince. A Heavenly messenger is sent to proclaim the good news to all people. A star appears in the east, announcing His birth to the whole world. Celestial phenomena and signs such as generally accompany the birth of a royal personage—sometimes a comet, sometimes a meteor, and sometimes a great wonder, but generally a star or light in the heavens—appear in this case. Wise men come from the East to worship Him. Kings and princes bring their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh—the usual offerings to a newborn prince—Herod himself, though in treachery, offers to come and do reverence to the baby king.

The words of the angelic ambassador and others that prophesy concerning His mission are also in keeping with the same idea. “Fear not,” says the angel of annunciation, “for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this

day a Savior which is Christ the Lord, a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of my people Israel." "Behold this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel." "He shall be great and called the Son of the Highest; the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David. He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there shall be no end;" In short, the phenomena witnessed, the reverence shown, and the promises and prophecies attending Christ's birth are all such as attended the birth, or as are alleged to attend the birth, of every one destined to reign.

The names given to Christ have also all a suggestion of royalty. The word "Christ" itself means "anointed," or "crowned;" anointing being the ancient mode of crowning. His name, therefore, implies a crowned head, or royal personage. He is sometimes called the "Lord's Anointed," or the one elected or designed by God to be king. Like the uncrowned pretenders of Europe to-day, who set themselves up as kings by right, if not in fact, He, notwithstanding His temporary dethronement, felt, like the

Count de Chamborde, that He was a king under the favor and purpose of God.

He was called the "Son of David," or successor of the last king of Israel. Like William of Prussia who took up the broken line of Barbarossa, He, the new Shiloh, was to take up that of Judah. He is called "the Prince of the House of David," "the lion of the tribe of Judah," "the Holy One of Israel," and other names strongly regal and national.

His additional epithet of "Jesus," or "Savior," like that of "the Conqueror," or "the Great," was a title intended to express His character as a prince. For while, like Alexander, Charlemagne and William of Normandy, He was to aggrandize His own name and people, and to conquer others, He was principally to save them from their miseries. While, therefore, He was also to be "called Great and the Son of the Highest," His common name was to be "Savior;" "Ye shall call His name Jesus; for He shall save the people from their sins."

He was also called "the Son of God," since divine birth, if not deity itself, is one of the attributes of kings, as just explained. He was

sometimes called "the King of the Jews ;" but He dared not openly assume this name ; partly because many of the Jews did not accept Him as their king, but protested, "We will not have this man to rule over us," and partly because of the air of treason to Rome, which gathered about such a title. But that He aimed at royalty, or that some of His followers did so for Him, there can be no doubt, even if we consider His names alone as evidence.

The reverence and allegiance shown Him as king, also indicate that He was esteemed as destined for royalty. He was called "Lord," "Master," "Good Master," "Reverence," "Worship," "My Lord and My God," etc. He discountenanced the use of these terms at first, and from time to time reproved His followers for such un-republicanism ; but afterwards, whether through a lapse from His republican principles, or owing to ambitious designs, He allowed them, if He did not actually encourage them.

At the transfiguration, which was a sort of secret crowning, or establishing of Christ in His royal office, His disciples fell on their faces with

true eastern devotion, and swore everlasting fealty to His cause. At His entry into Jerusalem the people strewed garments and branches of trees in His way, and cried, "Hozannah, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." The centurian desiring to send for Him hesitated, saying, "I am not worthy that He should come unto me;" but observed that, being a man of rank himself, and accustomed to order others under him, he knew what was due to superiors, and, like all protégés of royalty, was interested in having rank etiquette maintained. When John the Baptist was sent to prepare the people for His accession, and was himself taken for a superior or royal personage, he said of Christ, "There cometh after me one mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to loose," and added, "He must increase and I must decrease." Wise men, rich men and kings, as already observed, came at His birth to do Him homage. He Himself refused, as Lord over all, to reverence, or bow down to Satan, or any one else than God. "Angels came and ministered unto Him" as to a superior. The people on one occasion sought to forcibly

take Him, and make Him king. The daughters of Jerusalem at His crucifixion wept for Him as for their dying monarch, and pledged themselves, like the Imperialists at the grave of Napoleon, to be faithful to His cause whoever might be His successor.

The people believed Him as one who could not err, and obeyed Him as one who could command no wrong. His *ipse dixit* was law, and they understood Him, when speaking, as "one having authority, and not as the scribes." In short, it is clear that all persons monarchically inclined, regarded Christ as a king, and were in favor of His elevation, like that of Napoleon, to the throne, notwithstanding the republican and socialistic movement in which His cause, like Napoleon's, had its birth.

The monarchical character of His movement, and His aspirations to royalty, may be further inferred from the opposition of rival kings to His plan and work. Herod commenced this opposition at His birth, and Pilate ended it with His death. Driven from Judea, driven from the whole continent of Asia, and driven at last from the world itself, Jesus was an almost perpetual

refugee from the fury of the rulers. Exiled to Africa, exiled to the grave, and exiled at last to Heaven, His every flight was from persecution. Felix and the Cæsars continued the opposition against His followers, until the blood of the martyrs had been sown over the whole Roman empire. Nor did the persecution cease until in the harvest under Constantine the cause of Christ like that of Louis Philippe, reached at last the throne; whither it, like that of the Orleans family, had been tending three hundred years.

It was the jealousy of the rulers that dictated the whole policy and attitude of the state toward the early Christians, feeling, as they did, that with the Christian agitations none of the existing thrones were safe. In the accusation brought against Paul and his companions, are these words: "These all do contrary to the decrees of Cæsar, saying that there is another king, one Jesus;" when it is said that "they troubled the people and the rulers of the city when they heard these things." So also the Jews, in urging the death of Christ before Pilate, did it on the political ground of Christ's dangerous rivalry. "If thou let this man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend.

Whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Cæsar." Pilate himself asked Christ before condemning Him: "Art thou a king then?" and at the same time he asked the Jews, "Shall I crucify your king?" to which the Jews, in denying complicity with Christ's ambitious project, answered, "We have no king but Cæsar." As in derision of His royal pretensions, and to kill the effect of His agitation, the authorities placed on Him a crown of thorns and a purple robe; and cried, as they crucified Him in imperial colors, "Hail King of the Jews." They put on His cross an inscription, written in the three popular languages of the day, "This is the King of the Jews."

The whole conduct of the rulers toward Christ was, in short, that of opposition; so that the sacred writer is justified in the sweeping assertion, "The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord and against His Christ. For of a truth against the holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and people of Israel, were gathered together. And now, Lord, behold their threatenings."

Again, the pretensions and authority manifested by Christ Himself are suggestive of designs of royalty. While sympathizing with the common people in their misery, and espousing their cause in general, it was often as a superior or patronizing leader rather than as one out of their midst. He represented Himself as a champion, emperor, or Cæsar, who, like Napoleon, comprehended the situation, and meant to be their hero of deliverance. Like many popular leaders, who start out as one of the people, and subsequently get above them, He came to love them as a father or king, rather than as one of them. In answering the mother of Zebedee's children, who, with democratic familiarity, asked that her sons might be allowed sit by Him on the same seat of honor, one on His right side and the other on His left, He recalled her to a recognition of His rank and that of His peers. "Ye know not what ye ask," said He; "Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?"

No sooner, in fact, does He arrive at a position of acknowledged superiority over His followers, than He assumes an air of authority, like one about

to make a *coup d'état*. Not satisfied longer with the adoption by the people of His political and ethical sentiments, He wants them to think of Him as a superior, and entrust Him with dictatorial power. More than once, like Cæsar at the first of the Lupercal, He tried the people with a refusal of the crown, as if to test whether they were ready for His accession. On one occasion, after feeding the people with loaves and fishes, which doubtless made a good impression, He called His disciples aside, and asked, "Whom say the people that I am?" What are my prospects? Is my time yet come? "They answering, said, John the Baptist, but some say Elias; and others say that one of the old prophets is risen again;" at all of which Christ, like Cæsar, seems to be disappointed, and asks, "But whom say ye that I am?" Are you, my disciples, all right and capable of being trusted? Peter answering said, "The Christ (anointed) of God;" which answer was approved by Jesus, who "straightway charged them and commanded them to tell no man that thing, saying, the Son of Man must first suffer many things and be rejected."

According to another Gospel, Christ was so encouraged by Peter's recognition of His claims that He then and there determined to found His kingdom, and to reward with the first place the man who had so boldly confessed His royalty "Thou art Peter," He says, and upon this rock (or according to the Catholic interpretation "Thou art Peter, and with you as my chief minister,") I will build my church (kingdom, ekklessia) and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

He claimed that He had all power, and that He would yet assume it; waiting only for His time, like Henri of Bourbon, who said, "The choice is with the French people, but the time is with God." "All things," He said, "are delivered unto me by my Father," after the manner of the claims of the Bourbon right to rule.

That this project of assuming royal authority was entertained, appears also from the temptation by Satan, who, shrewd old devil that he was knew where to ply his inducements. As, therefore, because Christ was hungry after a forty days' fast, he tempted Him with bread; so, because he supposed Him to be ambitious and aspiring to a throne, he tempted Him with

crowns. He showed Him all the kingdoms of the world, and said, "All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them. If thou, therefore, wilt worship me, all shall be thine."

Christ refuses this offer for the same reason, among others, that Henri of Bourbon refused the crown of France, namely, that He considered that He possessed the original right to it, and would not receive it from anybody, or be accountable for it to any other power. Like Henry V, He would bow to no one, since that would be to acknowledge the supremacy of another dynasty. "Thou shalt worship the Lord God, and Him only shalt thou serve," God only being above Christ and the Bourbon, in their royal pretensions. He was not, like the Orleanists, to be satisfied with a division of royal honors, or a limited monarchy. He taught, consistently with straight out Bourbonism, that "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to destruction," and that "a house, (dynasty) divided against itself falleth;" and added as a bit of wisdom for His opponents: "If Satan also be divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand?"

He pretended to unlimited power and dignity, speaking as one having authority, and not as the scribes; laying down law as well as Gospel (equity), and setting aside the Jewish statute with a mere, "I say unto you." "Ye call me Master and Lord," He said, "and ye say well; for so I am." And what authority He did not assume Himself, His disciples ascribe to Him, or, at least, those monarchically inclined. "One is your Master, even Christ;" and, "All things are yours, whether principalities or powers; and ye are Christ's."

But not only did Jesus make pretensions to authority, but also promises that His right to rule would be enforced; much as the Pope makes promises to-day with regard to his temporal power, and as the Bourbons make promises of their universal restoration. For never has a prince pretended to the right to rule, who has not hoped for the opportunity. Christ assures His followers that His time will come, and that speedily. The kingdom of Heaven, He tells them, is near them; and "the people," we are told, "thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear." In answer to the oft-re-

peated question, so longingly and impatiently put by His disciples, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom of Judah?" He replies, "There be many of you standing here that shall not see death till ye see the Son of Man coming in His glory;" that, "This generation shall not pass away till all these things be fulfilled;" and that "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my Word shall not pass away." "Fear not little flock," He says encouragingly, "for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." "All things are delivered unto me by my Father"—not only promised but delivered, He having the possession as well as the right. And in planning the administration of this kingdom, He says, "I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table, in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

It is true, He admits, that for the present all power and the goods of the world are at the disposition of others, and that "the Son of Man has not where to lay His head;" but He assures them that this is only temporary. "When a strong

man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace," He says, "but when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armor wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils."

In view of the probable success of Jesus, and of the advantage that in such event will attend His partisans, He wants His disciples to commit themselves unreservedly to Him, whatever He may do, and, in particular, to not be offended at His monarchical designs. He offers them the inducements of office in return for the sacrifice of their republican principles, as if to buy them over as Napoleon III bought over Ollivier and other republicans. "Whosoever shall confess me before men," He says, "him will I confess before my Father which is in Heaven;" as much as to say that whosoever acknowledges Christ in the campaign shall be remembered by Him in the kingdom; or, that commitment shall be rewarded by patronage, and fidelity by office and rank.

He wanted them in particular, to commit themselves to Him personally, rather than to any principles or policy, His *personnel*, like that of Napoleon and Cromwell, constituting the iden-

tity of His cause. Thrice He asked of Peter, "Lovest thou me more than these?" and questioned him so strongly upon the sinister significance of His inquiry, that Peter became impatient and said, "Though all men forsake thee, yet will not I."

He wanted them also, in this commitment, to work as well as to profess. "Let those who love me," said Prim in the Spanish Cortes, "come and stand by me." So Christ in a like crisis said, "If ye love me keep my commandments." "Not every one that saith unto me 'Lord, Lord,' shall inherit the kingdom, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in Heaven." Work and fighting are to precede possession, a mere idle acknowledgment of his title not being enough. "To him that overcometh will I give a crown of life."

Prudent and cautious in advancing His claim, His disciples are to be "wise as serpents and harmless as doves." Now they are to "tell no man that He is the Christ," or aspiring king, and now to proclaim it "even to all." Never are they to indiscriminately publish His utterances. Some things He did not dare to mention to any-

body, because nobody was yet ready for them. "The time is not yet," he says.

One of His strokes of policy recalls that of Henry of Navarre at the battle of Ivry. When his forerunners went "to make ready for him," and were not received, they asked that the enemy be summarily destroyed; when Christ, knowing that this would not be popular, said, "Ye know not what spirit ye are of. The Son of Man came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them." Like the tender exclamation of Henry in battle, "Save the French," this course doubtless drew many to His standard.

There were also on the part of Christ and His apostles manifest aspirations and adjustments as for a kingdom. John the Baptist went professedly in His interest to urge the people to get ready for His reign: "Prepare ye," he cries, "the way of the Lord; make His path straight." His disciples are sent out to preach His kingdom and enlist the people in His name. Feints were made, as at the feast of the Lupercal, a kingly crown being offered Him, which He, like Cæsar, did refuse. For, we are told, "When Jesus perceived that they would come and take Him

by force to make Him a king, He departed again into a mountain Himself alone." A public entry was arranged for Him in Jerusalem, and a proclamation made, "Zion thy King cometh to thee." His partisans scattered garments in His way, crying *Vive le Roi*, "Hozannah, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." His disciples began to squabble for the first places and to ask to whom they should be given; hoping each, that he should get some ministership, lordship, or other easy place. For, says the evangelist, "There was a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest." He, to satisfy them, encouraged them all with the prospect of making them subordinate princes or dukes. "Ye which have followed me," He says, "in the regeneration, (or revolution), when the Son of Man shall sit in the throne of His glory ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." It was, it seems, to have been a sort of Duodecemvir government after the model of the ancient Roman commonwealth. When the mother of Zebedee's children asked that her two sons might sit one on His

right hand, and the other on His left in the kingdom, He told her that these places were to be given to those for whom they were prepared by His father. And when, in answer to the question, "Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" they said, Yes, "we are able," He answered, "Ye shall indeed drink of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with; but to sit on my right hand and on my left is not mine to give," but intimated that those places were already given out. We are told, as may naturally be supposed, that "when the ten heard it they were moved with indignation against the two brethren" for their ambition; for it was on their part a demand for exclusive superiority which had once been promised to them all equally.

In general, therefore, it appears that there was a strong monarchical element in the early Christian movement, that many persons expected and some desired Christ to come out openly for royalty, and to be crowned king; and that He Himself at times entertained thoughts of this kind, whether from personal ambition, or a belief that

it was for the best; so that, though the original Christian movement was in general a democratic and socialistic one, yet, like all revolutions, there was in it a monarchical element which now and then, partly through changes of opinion, and partly through treacherous betrayal, came to be uppermost and to give character to the cause.

CHAPTER VII

SPIRITUAL RECONCILIATION

I shall next consider the spirituality of Christ's kingdom. For it cannot be denied that, whether Christ contemplated a temporal kingdom or not, He contemplated, at times at least, a moral kingdom. It was His disciples principally, and still more His untaught followers, who expected the temporal kingdom. As a spiritual kingdom was something new, it required much time in which to get the idea and limits of it definitely into the minds of the projectors themselves, and much more in which to get it into those of the people who had to be instructed step by step in regard to it.

While, therefore, the early Christians did in general expect a temporal kingdom and its

emoluments, a different kingdom was in contemplation, either as additional to the temporal or instead of it. This new kind of kingdom, was most likely the special idea of Jesus, notwithstanding his apparent vacillation and the seeming contradictions of the evangelists. Christ's nature was essentially moral, and inclined to moral thoughts and sympathies. He had personally no political instincts or aspirations. What He assumed was forced upon Him by His followers, and by the difficulty of separating the secular from the moral in the idea of a kingdom. He had no fellowship with practical politics, or the tricks and methods of politicians, wire-pullers, lobbies or courts. He could not appreciate the Machiavellian spirit which prevails among such classes, much less descend to their corruption. He had rather the innocent ideas of clergymen, professors of learning, and speculative inquirers after truth. He was theoretical rather than practical, and benevolent rather than politic. Though His precepts for practical virtue were of the highest order, He was only theoretically practical, and was practically theoretical. The religious instincts and historic traditions of His

people were strongly implanted in His mind. The governmental idea on which alone He could enthuse was a religious rather than a political one; a theocracy or sophocracy rather than a military or civil organization—a moral or intellectual republic, like that of Pythagoras or Plato, rather than anything like the empire of Pericles or Alexander. He dreamed of something like the Papacy, which, though no less extensive than the most ambitious secular empire, should have its sway in all kingdoms, and its canon law prevailing in all courts, and yet not interfere with them, but only reach, through them, the people in moral matters.

Such was Christ's original idea of a kingdom, and in this sense He wanted to be king, or, since this was a sort of theocracy, requiring a god, to be god. Christ desired to build up the morals of the race into an interest, so as to make them an organized force, on a level with the wealth and intellect of the world, and to make them when thus organized, take the supremacy in the world.

This idea was further forced upon Christ by the course of events as the only kind of kingdom

for which there was room at the time, all the thrones being filled and the ordinary political issues exhausted. For it is a common shift when a party starts out and fails in one undertaking, to change the object and achieve a partial success in a different line. Christ and His apostles had sufficiently tested the impracticability of bringing either their socialistic or monarchical ideas to the throne by a political revolution, and yet, unwilling to abandon their project entirely, they turned their attention to the next best thing; a kingdom which required no overturning of the other kingdoms, but which might be successfully established without revolution; a kingdom within a kingdom, which like the present church, should permeate all kingdoms, and wield its influence in them all without being opposed by them, and which being independent of them should be unaffected by their changes, and even survive their dissolution; a kingdom, in short, without end, whether in space or time.

Hence He began to distinguish between temporal and spiritual, earthly and Heavenly, this world and the world to come, and between the powers of the two worlds. His kingdom was to

be of the other world, His reign of another realm, His laws of another sphere of action, His subjects of another citizenship. His kingdom was to be on the earth, yet distinct from it, His followers were to be "in the world yet not of the world;" the laws to be enforced were to prevail here, but they were to be of another origin, and of a Heavenly character and purpose.

With this idea, and with this aim, Christ uttered His words on the subject: which were at once in restraint of the prevailing expectation of an earthly kingdom, and in explanation of the real character of His kingdom. "My kingdom," He says, toward the close of His life, "is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world then would my servants fight that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now is my kingdom not from hence."

When the casuists, in order to make Him talk treason or nonsense, asked whether, as a professed king, claiming the allegiance of the people, He would advise them to give tribute to Cæsar, He answered, drawing this distinction still more clearly, "Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the

things that are God's." He wanted them to give to Cæsar the respect and obedience due to a political kingdom, and to God, or Himself, that due to a moral kingdom.

The respective claims of the two kingdoms, He thought, need not clash; and the duties of their common citizens may be compatible. When, therefore, the wronged heir petitioned Him, saying, "Master, speak to my brother, that he divide with me," He recognized this request as outside of His domain, and answered, "Who made me a judge or a divider over you?"—What have I to do with temporal concerns? And when again the people, according to their several professions, were asking what they should do in the new kingdom, each hoping to be appointed to some political place of preferment, He made answers, which, while they did indeed appoint them tasks in the spiritual kingdom, informed them also that these tasks were to be done while discharging the common duties of their present situations, and under the present governments.

To the publicans, for example, who expected to get something better than tax-gathering, He

said merely, "Exact no more than what is appointed you," or, "Do honestly the duties required by your present masters." To the soldiers who, like all revolutionists in arms, expected spoils and promotion, He said, "Do violence to no man, neither accuse any man falsely, and be content with your wages." In short, He told them all to keep at their secular employment and in the usual way, the duties of the new kingdom consisting in doing well the duties of the present kingdom.

He confessed that the revolution, or kingdom, which He was to usher in, was not as radical as they had conceived, or as He and His disciples had been contemplating. Instead of a new social order such as the communists wanted, there was not to be even a republic, or new dynasty; but only some moral changes. We are told, and can readily believe, that the people were roused on hearing this announcement, and naturally asked whether He was the anointed or not. They did not like His platform, and would not, as socialists, follow so despairing and conservative a leader. This was not, in their opinion, the language that became a king who professed

to cure their social ills, and establish, if not a community in which they should do nothing disagreeable, at least a kingdom which would give them new appointments and work.

But Jesus resisted the pressure for a temporal kingdom, and illustrated His position by acts as well as words. When at the height of His popularity it was proposed to crown Him, He refused the honor, it being related that "when He perceived that they would come and take Him by force to make Him a king He departed again into a mountain Himself alone." For, although, as we have said, this conduct may have been a mere feint to feel the way, when He was really ambitious of monarchical honors, or else a genuine expression of His republicanism, yet it may also have been an anti-political demonstration, in favor of a mere spiritual or moral kingdom. At all events He indicated that He did not want to be crowned a king; and His conduct was a disappointment to the people, who expected in Him a temporal ruler.

Several times He had to remind His disciples, even the most spiritual among them, as John, of the distinction which He would make; and yet

He could not make it clear to their secular minds. For John and James, after He had made a special attempt to distinguish between a temporal and a spiritual kingdom, came to Him and asked that they might have the nearest places to Him in the new kingdom, one to sit on His right hand and the other on His left. "Ye know not what ye ask," said Christ; and He then further explained His kingdom to them.

And John the Baptist, when He was in prison, and the temporal prospect looked dark, sent messengers to Jesus to ask, "Art thou He that should come, or look we for another?" thinking, no doubt, that it ill accorded with His kingly pretensions, that His chief minister should lie incarcerated in a dungeon, "Go tell John," said Christ, recalling him from his political expectations to the deeds of mercy which constituted the successful work of His kingdom, "Go tell John what things ye see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have the Gospel preached to them."

Christ further enforced His idea of a spiritual kingdom by utterances and acts entirely incon-

sistent with the supposition of a political kingdom. His officers were to be the least among them, and His citizens were to be childlike. "Suffer little children," He says, "to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of Heaven." Instead of shrewd politicians, strong statesmen, and bloodthirsty warriors, He meant to take the poor, the suffering and the despised as His forces, and with them—the weak things of the earth—to conquer and rule society.

When a scene of triumph was prepared for Him, and He was to ride into Jerusalem as king, He chose to go in a way that was death to royalty and its pretensions. Instead of royal pomp and splendor, with a triumphant chariot and attendants, He came "meek and lowly and on an ass." It was perhaps intended by Him as a caricature of royalty; just as the purple robe and the inscription on the cross were intended as a caricature by His enemies. "Zion behold thy king," is equal to "This is the King of the Jews;" and Christ on an ass is equal to Christ on the cross. As a type of a spiritual kingdom, however, both are equally powerful; the one as

an example of unpretension, and the other as an example of suffering.

When speaking of Himself in contrast with the expectations of Him and of His appearance, He said to those who misapprehended His designs, "What went ye out to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold they which are gorgeously arrayed and live delicately are in king's courts." He came, like His messenger John, simple and unostentatious, and like him moved about in a wilderness without property or even a home; and yet, while having not where to lay His head, He proclaimed Himself the chief of a boundless empire.

In conclusion I will add, that to explain the spiritual as well as the monarchical character of Christ's kingdom, we must suppose, as on inquiry we find to be the fact, that there was an important change in the policy of the early Christian movement, a change by which in course of time the projectors came to abandon their early cause, and to swerve around to a directly opposite position. Starting out as socialistic, the movement became religious; starting out as purely republican, it became

monarchical and theocratic; starting out as political, it became moral. In general it was a change from radical to conservative; from a contemplated revolution to a moderate reform.

This change, which we have already explained, was due partly, as we have seen, to a difference of opinion among the original propagators of Christianity, by which in course of time the opinions of a different set from those first controlling it came to be uppermost in the counsels; partly to the ill success of the movement, requiring a change of object to avoid an utter failure; partly to changes effected in the opinion of the leaders by accumulations of experience; partly, perhaps, to the temptations of a crown and of royal sinecures, and partly, no doubt, to the treachery of false friends and of enemies who had entered the cause.

But whatever the cause, there was a radical change. Instead of that bold, revolutionary position which they assumed at first, when they expected to overturn all society and remedy all ills by a new government, they are soon found counselling submission to existing authorities, and patient working under the old system—the

deadliest bane of socialism, which feeds mainly on revolution.

For Christ, instead of longer encouraging, as He had appeared to do, the publicans to get all property in their hands for redistribution, now tells them to "exact no more than what is appointed them;" and instead of inciting, as formerly, the soldiers, commune-like, to revel in the blood of the citizens and the spoils of the rich, He tells them to "do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely and be content with their wages." In short, He makes such a radical departure from His old supposed position and promises, that the people, on learning it, instinctively ask "whether He is the Anointed or not."

Later on in their course, the apostles, after they had tried the community and tested the principles of absolute equality and universal labor, became dissatisfied, and said, "It is not reason that we should leave the Word of God and serve tables." Getting ecclesiastical, priestly and pretentious, they wanted to raise themselves above the people, as they have effectively done in subsequent times.

Christ admits this change of policy Himself,

and expressly countermands some of His early advice. After telling His disciples what He had at first proposed, and what, in view of that, He had urged them to do, He says, "But it shall not be so now." "When I sent you without scrip, and purse and shoes, lacked ye anything? And they said nothing. Then said He unto them But now he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip." He renounced, in short, His supposed early communism, and advised a re-entrance upon independent and individual life.

He renounced also the extreme democracy of His associates, and so far departed from their professions of equality as to advise a proper observance and respect for rank. Instead of longer encouraging a boorish familiarity, in which they all boasted themselves to be as good as anybody, and worthy of any place or honor, He says now, "When thou art bidden of a man to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room, lest a more honorable man than thou be bidden of him; and he that bade thee and him come and say to thee, 'Give this man place,' and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room. But when thou

art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, 'Friend, go up higher;' then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee," In other words Christ's later advice is: Be content to take the lowest rank, and fill your place well in it; and then, notwithstanding the social distinctions, you will gradually come to take a more honorable position, and be yourselves the people of rank and fashion, and the recipients of the worship of others. For this advice, it will be remembered, was given at a time when He "marked how they (the common people at the feast of the Pharisee,) chose out the chief rooms," in utter disregard of the old etiquette of caste distinctions, though in pursuance of Christ's own doctrine of equality lately advanced.

The apostles, and especially Paul, changed still more than did Christ the early policy of Christianity; and the change went on so rapidly after the death of Christ, that by the time of Cyprian they had entirely got rid of their communism. For contrasting the Christianity of later times with the purpose and practice of its founders,

Cyprian says: "Each one is desirous of increasing his estate, and, forgetful of what believers had either done in the times of the apostles, or always ought to do, they, with insatiable ardor and covetousness, devoted themselves to the increase of their property."

But not to pass out of apostolic times, Paul took special pains to contradict not only the socialism, but all the revolutionary doctrines of his predecessors. He advised the people to recognize both the existing governments and the principles on which they were founded, including especially the class distinctions. "Let every soul," he says, "be subject unto the higher powers. * * The powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever, therefore, resisteth the power resisteth the ordinance. * * For rulers are not a terror to good works (as the communists had taught,) but to the evil. For he (the ruler) is a minister of God to thee for good, * * a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake * * For this cause pay ye tribute also, (a disputed point among them,) * * "Render therefore," he

continues, "to all their dues, tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor;" and then with decided anti-socialistic feeling, "Owe no man anything."

Paul had no sympathy with the equality or perfectibility scheme of the fishermen and menial publicans; but, with the wonted conservatism of his class, being a lawyer, he wanted the traditional institutions and distinctions, even to those of slavery, to be kept up. "Masters," he says, in acknowledgment of this relation, and in restraint only of its abuse, "masters, give your servants that which is just and equal, knowing that ye also have a Master in Heaven." And "Servants," (*douloi*, or slaves), he continues, in discouragement of anything like insubordination or insurrection, "be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh. * * Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor that the name of God and His doctrine be not blasphemed."

So anxious was Paul to preserve the institution of servitude or slavery, that, instead of hold-

ing out the deliverance which his predecessors had promised under Christianity, he said, "Art thou called being a servant, care not for it; but if thou mayest be made free, use it the rather." In this spirit he even sent back into slavery the fugitive Onesimus, who had run away from his master to become a leader in the Christian movement. He advised the slaves to look to their masters' interests as their own, (as pro-slavery people have always done) and to act out their slavery as a merit to themselves, "not with eye service as men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart, fearing (not the master but) God;" and in this service, he said, they should recognize their traditional place, "not answering again (as equals) but showing all good fidelity that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior."

And Peter, who was always vacillating between extremes; now damning Ananias and Sapphira because not communistic enough, and now counselling the worst form of slavery, (just as he at one time professed fidelity to his Master above all others, and the next hour denied Him;) Peter went so far in one of his epistles as to counsel obedience and deference even to bad

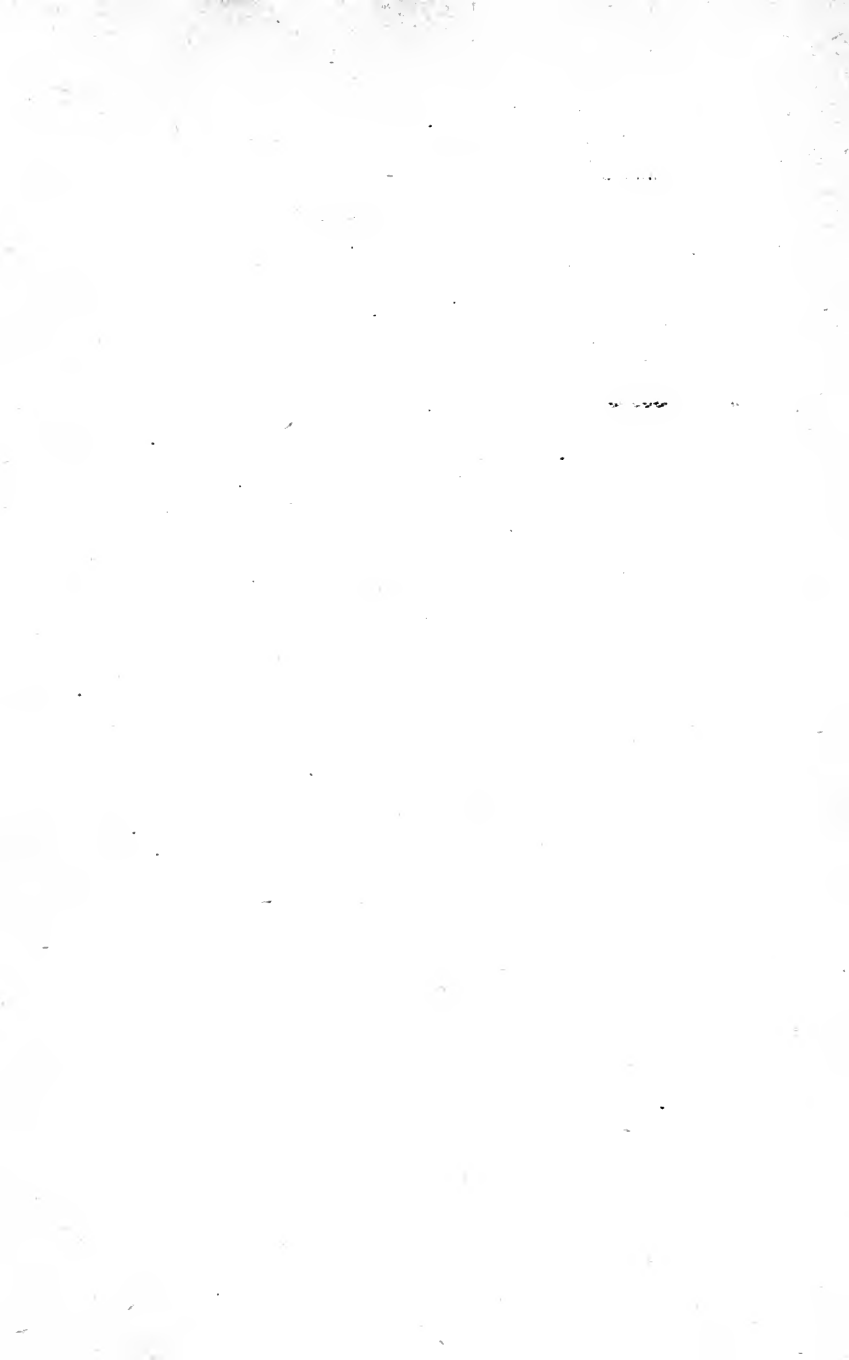
masters. "Servants," he said, "be subject to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward."

And so, in general, the later apostles, instead of manifesting their former uncompromising democracy, which only now and then still showed itself in such general injunctions as "Be ye not servants of men," retreated from the advanced republicanism of Christ; and not only acquiesced in, but upheld the social systems of the day, giving up their time entirely to the spiritual or moral, to the neglect of one-half of the object of early Christianity.

It is obvious, therefore, that there was a general change in the policy of early Christianity; by which in course of time, Christ, and still more His apostles and subsequent followers, veered from their original course, and in part made a new system out of the movement. It is largely due to this change that there seem to be so many contradictions in the Gospels touching political matters, and that it is so difficult to gather a consistent general doctrine from the utterances having a political bearing.







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